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ST. CLEMENTS EVE.

Last Seen

20 April

1862

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE

A PLAY.

BY

HENRY TAYLOR,

AUTHOR OF "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE."

LONDON : CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1862.

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TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUC D'AUMÂLE,
THIS COMMEMORATION
OF A PRINCE OF THE ROYAL HOUSE OF FRANCE,
MORE FAVOURED BY NATURE THAN BY FORTUNE,
IS DEDICATED
WITH GREAT RESPECT
BY
THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E.

IN this Play I have desired to give some such representation as dramatic writing can convey, of a period in the history of France under Charles VI. when society was reduced, by disorders in the realm and schism in the Church, to perhaps the worst condition of which the Middle Ages afford an example. The only feature of the time which can be contemplated with pleasure is the exceeding love which the people bare to their afflicted King. For the alienation of his mind, though intermittent, relieved him in their eyes from all responsibility for their sufferings; showing how

deprivation of power in a Sovereign (casual it is true in this case, but significant perhaps of the like results in cases in which it is politically ordained,) may tend to enhance, rather than abate, the love and reverence of the people. Popular indignation was directed upon others, whilst loyalty and pity held a free course; and the youthful errors of the King (which were not those of an evil disposition) were forgotten in his calamity. He deserved that they should be forgotten; for so often as reason returned, he seemed to be as tenderly sensible of the sufferings of his subjects as they were of his; and what little precarious power he possessed from time to time, walking always on the edge of insanity, was exerted for their relief.


His brother Louis, Duke of Orleans, was the representative of the chivalry of France for the time being; "*Rien si chevaleresque*," says the

historian. "D'ailleurs il étoit aimable, agréable
"et doux dans ses manières, son langage étoit facile,
"raisonnable et séduisant; il savoit s'entretenir
"mieux qu'aucun Prince avec les Docteurs et les
"hommes habiles des conseils du Roi." And in the
appeal delivered to the Council by the Abbé of
St. Fiacre on the part of his widow, shortly after
his death, it is averred to have been known to
every one that in eloquence and discernment his
equal was hardly to be found; "*Sapiebat*," he
adds, "*sicut Angelus Domini*;" whilst in his life
and manners he was frank, gentle, and com-
passionate; and in personal beauty, says the Abbé,
if that were a matter to be spoken of, there needed
no more to be said than that he resembled the
King.

If the Duke was chivalrous, not so was the age
in which he lived. Nor indeed is chivalry (in the
sense of nobility of mind) the attribute of any age,

or of Knights and Nobles at large in any time or country, though there may be more individual examples of it in one age than in another. And those who like Ariosto (himself born in the fifteenth century) ascribe it to a class, will generally be found, like him, to put it back to a few centuries before any times that they can know much about.

The fifteenth century at all events was full of frauds and treacheries in every walk of life; and even a chivalrous man in those days, if sagacious, might have been expected to be suspicious. But amongst the chivalrous qualities of Louis Duke of Orleans was a generous, perhaps careless, confidence in men who were not worthy to be trusted. The antagonist by whom he was first confronted at his Brother's court, his Uncle Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, was, it is true, as honourable as himself; and Louis probably made no mistake when, in a will dated in the season of their



hostility, with a magnanimous faith in the other's magnanimity, he left his children to the guardianship of his enemy. But his Uncle died before him, and when the quarrel descended to Philippe's son, "Jean sans Peur," Louis' confidence in the honour of an enemy was fatally misplaced.

For whilst the Duke of Orleans represented the chivalry of the time such as it was (not a virtuous or stainless chivalry) the new Duke of Burgundy was an equally genuine representative of its cruelty and pride. If he was without fear, he was also without faith, and his short career was scarcely less perfidious than ferocious, from the tragedy in the Vieille Rue du Temple, till justice met him, in the form of what may be called specific retribution, on the bridge at Montereau.

The fidelity of an historian is not to be expected of a dramatist. Some transposition of events and compression of time have been necessary to bring

certain salient incidents of the period within the compass of the action ; and without some variation of detail truth to art must have been sacrificed to historic truth in a larger measure than is demanded for the chief ends which historic truth is designed to subserve. Even incidents which, being historically true, were at the same time eminently dramatic or picturesque, have not always been available, inasmuch as they could not be harmonized with other dramatic effects. But under these conditions (which are I believe inevitable in all such works) my endeavour has been to represent faithfully the characters of the principal persons and the temper of the times.

The contemporary or nearly contemporary authorities are the *Chronicles of Jean Juvenal des Ursins*, of the *Religieux de St. Denys*, and of *Monstrelet* ; and a narrative almost equally minute,

but less diffuse and more animated, may be read in the "Histoire des Ducs De Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois," by M. De Barante; an author who, more than any other modern historian, seems to live in the times of which he writes.

EAST SHEEN,

April, 1862.

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE:

A PLAY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

CHARLES THE SIXTH of France (*otherwise Charles Le Fou, or Charles Le Bien Aime*).

LOUIS, Duke of Orleans, his brother.

JEAN, Duke of Burgundy, his cousin (*otherwise Jean-Sans-Peur*).

THE BASTARD OF MONTARGIS, } *Followers of the Duke of*
RAIZ DE VEZELAY, } *Burgundy.*

RAOUL DE ROUVROY, }
RANULPH DE ROCHE-BARON, and } *also Burgundians.*
others, }

GEOFFREY DE LAVAL, Page to the Duke of Orleans.

GRIS-NEZ, Fool to the Duke of Orleans.

HENRI DE VIERZON, }
RENÉ D'AICELIN, } *Orleanists.*
LORÉ DE CASSINEL, and others, }

ROBERT DE MENUOT (*otherwise Robert the Hermit*).

THE PROVOST OF PARIS.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS.

The Dukes of BERRI and BOURBON, and the Titular King of
SICILY, Princes of the Blood Royal of France.

FATHERS BUVULAN and BETIZAC, *Augustinian Monks.*

PASSAC, *the King's Barber.*

The King's Chamberlain ; A Serjeant of the Watch ; A Painter ;
Priests ; Citizens ; Officers of Justice.

WOMEN.

THE ABBESS OF THE CELESTINES.

IOLANDE DE ST. REMY, } *Pupils in that Convent.*
FLOS DE FLAVY, }

Nuns, Novices, and Pupils.

Place, PARIS.

Time, NOVEMBER, 1407.

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Palace of the Archbishop of Paris.

The PROVOST OF PARIS and ROBERT THE HERMIT.

PROVOST.

His Grace is not yet risen ; his health is weak ;
But from his chaplain we shall hear anon
Whether it please him, when the Council meets,
To call you in. I doubt not that he will.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

My call is from a greater than His Grace,
Whom both obey.

PROVOST.

Meantime 'tis fit you know
What face we wear at Paris.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

France elsewhere
Bleeds from a thousand wounds. Each step I took
In my long journey hither, brought in sight
Old scars and new. What face the town puts on
Thou shalt instruct me ; for God gives me leave
To learn from pious men.

PROVOST.

Slowly the King
Picks up the fragments of his shattered mind,
And as the daylight on his reason dawns
Beholds his kingdom a bewildered wreck
Tost to and fro by factions, rent and riven
By these two rival Dukes ; his brother first,
And next his cousin, seizing sovran sway,
And each so using it as makes good men
Hope something from a change. When Orleans
rules,
With dance and song a light and dissolute grace

Doth something gild misgovernment ; whilst they
Who hear him, 'twixt a revel and a masque,
Give audience to some Doctor of the Church,
Grave as the Doctor's self and gracious more,
Cannot but marvel that a man so sage,
And for his years so learned, should misuse
The gifts of God and be his country's curse.
Then comes that other Duke, revengeful, rough,
Imperious and cruel ; and they who winced
Beneath his cousin's handling, wonder now
That they were not content. You'll see them both ;
For when the King's physicians gave him leave
To sit in council, he bade both attend,
Thinking to put their discords into tune ;
Wherein when Jove and Saturn meet and kiss
There's hope he may prevail.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

On either head

A vial will I empty.

PROVOST.

Well—so—well—

But if I err not, the Archbishop's Grace

Would gladly know the purport and the drift
Of that you shall discourse.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

It may not be.

Say to His Grace I know it not myself.
Whate'er God puts it in my heart to say
That will I speak; but counsel will I none
With mortal man.

PROVOST.

The courage of the tongue
Is truly, like the courage of the hand,
Discreetly used, a prizeable possession;
But what befits the presence of a King
Is boldness tempered with some touch of fear.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

There where I stand in presence of my King
There stand I, too, in presence of my God.
Fearing my God I come before my King
With reverence, as is meet, but not with fear.

PROVOST.

Well, for the King, poor gentleman, no speech
How bold soe'er and telling bitter truth

Would meet a frown from him. His brother shares
The sweetness of his nature. Other clay
Dug from some miry slough or sulphurous bog
With many a vein of mineral poison mixed
Went to the making of Duke Jean-Sans-Peur.
This knew the crafty Amorabaquin.
When captives by the hundred were hewn down
'Twas not rich ransom only spared the Duke.
'Twas that a dying Dervise prophesied
More Christian blood should by his mean be shed
Than e'er by Bajazet with all his hosts.
Therefore it was to France he sent him back
With gifts, and what were they? 'twas bowstrings
made
Of human entrails.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Choice the offering! Yea,
Fit bounty of fit patron to fit friend.

PROVOST.

Good Robert, neither thine nor yet that voice,
Were it again on earth, which sobered Saul,
Can mitigate Duke John or heal the strife

Which from these quarrelsome cousins breathes
abroad

War, pestilence and famine. Hope it not.

Once by His Grace of Bourbon's intercession

Peace was patched up and injuries forgiven.

Well, some three months was wonderful accord ;

Then came black looks, and then "To arms, to
arms !"

The sole sick hope of France is in the King.

Awhile his malady remits and joy

Lights up the land ; then darkness redescends.

Give but to him stability of health

And all were well. Alas ! it will not be.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Whence came the chastisement the mercy may.

PROVOST.

Whence came the chastisement we know ; but how,

And wherefore, was a mystery for long years

And diversely discoursed. Urban of Rome

Did nothing doubt 'twas that the King had owned

Clement of Avignon ; whilst Clement knew

'Twas that he fought not to the death 'gainst Urban ;

His doctors said 'twas that he ceased their drugs ;
All doctors else that he had sometime ta'en them ;
The people deemed it in its first assault
A judgment for the impostes and the aids,
But seeing these have doubled since, they fell
From this belief, and being he was a boy
When first afflicted, were it this, they said,
His Council should go mad and not himself.
Thus error is but transient, truth prevails
Sure as day follows night, and now none doubts,
What to wise men was patent from the first,
That 'tis the work of sorcerers, men accursed
And slaves of Satan and by him suborned
Upon this Christian kingdom to bring down
Disaster and dismay, and snare the souls
Of thousands daily shedding brothers' blood.
But who they be, these sorcerers, there's the doubt :
Not few have been impeached and hanged or burnt ;
But no success ensuing, the charge, 'tis deemed,
Was fashioned in excess of godly zeal
Which Satan misdirected ; thus the quest
Is daily keener lest the King relapse ;
And there be now arrived two monks from Eu

Who know to search out sorceries. Much hope
Is squandered on these monks, but for myself
I like them not ; they ride in coats of mail'
And waste the night in riot and debauch.
Still if they know their art, far be it from me
To question of their lives.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

If these be evil
Their art is not of God nor aught avails
For counterworking Satan. Let them troop.
I will not suffer them.

PROVOST.

Nay but we must.
'Tis partly herein to advise the King
The Council meets to-day.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP'S CHAPLAIN.

Well, worthy friend,
What saith His Grace ?

CHAPLAIN.

Good Hermit, come this way.
His Grace hath wrapped him hastily in his gown
And said his hours, and waits thee in his closet.

He's favourably minded and he saith
He knows not if thy mission be divine,
But were it human only, he were loth
To let good words be lost. Please you, this way.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street—A Religious Procession crosses the Stage, chanting a "Gratias agimus," and carrying a Shrine with the true and entire head of St. Denys, accompanied by a throng of citizens.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Well, for this mercy of mercies God be praised !
And if His Gracious Majesty would please
To walk abroad, should not his eyes behold
The loving'st truly and the joyfullest city
That earth can show.

SECOND CITIZEN.

I never saw the like ;
'Tis as a town for many a month besieged
When now the siege is raised and food and wine
Come in by cart-loads. Seemed we not before
Half starved, and now half tipsy ?

THIRD CITIZEN.

Starved we were
And starved we are ; but foul befall the wretch,
If such there be, who would not feed for life
On husks and draff, if so it might please God
To keep the King in health.

WOMAN.

Bless him for ever !
When he was well not one so mean among us
But he could spare a smile to make her happy.
Bless his sweet gracious kindly face ! I saw him
Sitting at mass so comely and so holy !
But Lord, Sirs, he was ghostly pale.

PRIEST.

Poor soul !
What has he suffered ! Never king but David
Was so tormented ; yea, the sorrows of Hell
Gat hold of him.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Alas, and may again !

THIRD CITIZEN.

Mercy forbid !

PRIEST.

St. Clement's Eve draws near ;

'Twixt this and then watch ye and pray. Ye know

The ancient verse writ with a raven's quill,

Which threatens at that hour the House of Valois.

'Tis thus it runs :

*" When fourteen hundred years and seven**" Have slid since Jesus came from Heaven,**" Fates and Furies join to weave**" A garland for St. Clement's Eve.**" House of Valois, hold thine own !**" A shadow sits upon a throne.**" Ware what is and is to be,**" There's blood upon the Fleur-de-Lys."*

Watch ye, and fast, and pray.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Yes, father, yes ;

And ever 'tis my prayer that God would please

To point a finger at those sorcerers

That work the King this ill. Give us to know

What men they be, we'd slice them into gobbets

And fling their flesh to the dogs.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Look, who comes here ;

Surely the wise and worthy monks from Eu,
Who come to search it out, and with them one
That's sore suspected, Passac, the King's barber.

*[Enter from the side at which the procession had
passed out FATHER BUVULAN and FATHER
BETIZAC, followed by two MARSHALSMEN with
PASSAC in custody, and a throng of Citizens
shouting.]*

PASSAC.

Oh hear me, Sirs, alas ye will not hear me !

CITIZENS.

Where is the cart ? the cart has fallen behind :
Stop for the cart ; no faggots here, no pitch !

PASSAC.

Oh hear me, Sirs : I ever loved the King,
Yea was his very worshipper ; I hurt him !
I that would die to give his gracious soul
One moment's peace.

FATHER BUVULAN.

My friends, ye are not fools,
Ye are not senseless blocks ; ye have your wits ;
Ye can discern the truth. Behold this barber ;

Look at this bag and ring. What shall be said ?
Here's one that, being barber to the King,
Puts me this ring into a corpse's mouth,
(A Jew's that had been hung was Tuesday week
For strangling Chrisom babies e'er the Priest
Sweating with haste could reach to christen them,)
Sticks me this ring into this corpse's mouth,
Leaves it three days, then puts it in this bag
Sewn with the dead man's skin and filled to the neck
With his accursèd ashes, and the bag
Wears next his heart. What shall be said, I ask ?

CITIZENS.

Away to the stake—away—hale him along,
And prod him with your lances as ye go.

PASSAC.

Oh, Sirs, 'tis false ; I never did such things.
Kind, noble Sirs, believe me, for the ring
I had it of my wife when I was courting ;
The bag, Sirs, holds the ashes of St. Maud ;
'Twas given me by the Abbot of Beaumanoir
By reason I had shaven him fifteen years,
When, times being hard, he could not pay in cash,
And gave me this.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Truly the Father of Lies

Sits like a weaver at his loom and weaves.

You'll find him, Sirs, as hardy to deny

The Eve of Pentecost, when he was seen

At midnight in the Rue des Ursulins

Ranging and whirling round and round the gibbet,

Whiles the dead bodies, swinging in the wind,

Sang "Ave Sathanas!" That too he'll deny.

PASSAC.

As I'm a Christian man, Sirs, it is false.

FATHER BETIZAC.

I told you so ; I knew he would deny it.

PASSAC.

At midnight on the Eve of Pentecost

I was at Nocturns in the Chapel Royal.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Oh monstrous liar ! I saw thee with my eyes

Ranging and scouring round and about the gibbet

At midnight chimes ; yea with my eyes I saw thee ;

Thou hadst put on the body of a cur,

A cock-tailed cur.

FATHER BETIZAC.

And did ye mark, my friends,
Now as we passed the true head of St. Denys
And playing on our easy credulous minds
He knelt and crossed himself, marked ye I say
How the head frowned?

THIRD CITIZEN.

It did; I saw it frown;
An angry frown; I trembled like a leaf.

PASSAC.

'Twas at these monks it frowned and not at me.
'Tis they that are magicians as I can prove;
'Tis they.

FATHER BUVULAN.

Oh mercy on my sinful soul!
I ne'er knew Satan so enraged before.
Here comes the cart; bring him along, false hound!
Mark when he burns if the flames be not blue.

CITIZENS.

Bring him along—a faggot each—come on.

PASSAC.

Dolts! Idiots! Will ye have my life? Then take it;

And may the curse of God and all good men
And all the Blessed Company of Heaven
Swallow you quick, ye blood-bespattered knaves,
And send you seething to the bottomless pit!

FATHER BETIZAC.

Hoo ! grace defend us ! What ! blue flames already !
Look to him, serjeants, he is dangerous ;
So—knot his hands behind him. Up with a psalm ;
Sing as ye go the “ Deus ultionum.”

[*Exeunt—the Monks last. Then enter the BASTARD
OF MONTARGIS and RAIZ DE VEZELAY.*]

MONTARGIS.

Ay, a good wench I grant you, free and merry
Before the wind ; but luff her up and lo !
Crack goes the topmast, rudder fells the pilot,
Split flies the foresail. . . . Ha ! is yonder monk. . .
Yes by St. George it is. . . . Ho, Betizac !
I think he hears me. . . . Yes, a lively wench,
And, as they all are, winning—till she's won ;
Then comes a calm.

DE VEZELAY.

What ! is it even so ?

Does Flos fall flat ?

MONTARGIS.

Save when she's furious. Ha !

Re-enter FATHER BETIZAC.

The man I sought—a serviceable man,
Wilt do me a good turn ?

FATHER BETIZAC.

Your worship's slave,
Obedient ever. In my way, my Lord ?
Aught in my way ?

MONTARGIS.

In one, friend, of thy ways ;
For thou hast two ; with roses strewn is this,
That in like manner red—but not with roses.
'Tis in the first I need thee ; thou hast spells,
Potions and powders, shells and herbs and seeds,
Gathered or mixed when Dian in eclipse
Made Venus doubly bright.

FATHER BETIZAC.

My Lord, I have.
How come by 'twere not good for me to say
Nor you to hear. But thus much I may tell ;
When Ashtaroth and Asmodai were flung

From heaven to earth, they harboured in a cave
In Normandy, when spitting on the ground
There where they spat upgrew a wondrous plant
Whereof the leaves, powdered and mixed in wine,
Are of that virtue they shall change the hearts
Of twice-vowed Vestals.

MONTARGIS.

Such a one is she
Whom I would subjugate. The Northern Lights
Shine with no softer radiance, nor frequent
A frostier region. Lo! a mineral spell
Less named than known in necromantic lore
I give thee in acquittance.

[Gives him a gold piece.]

Send that drug.

BETIZAC.

'Tis yours, my Lord.


MONTARGIS.

Ere night?

BETIZAC.

My lord, ere night

I'll send it you.



MONTARGIS.

A Cupid of mine own
I'll send to fetch it rather. Fare thee well.

[*Exit* BETIZAC.

DE VEZELAY.

How's this, Montargis? Flos then fell not flat
Till rose another o'er her?

MONTARGIS.

Well, 'tis true.

DE VEZELAY.

Why here's a change! like Carnival to Lent
Done in a day.

MONTARGIS.

Truly a Lenten change
Fits not my festive spirit, nor do I look
For forty days to fast or four or one.
If not befriended by the friar's philter,
I know by what; for I am of the mind
Of Jean de Malestroït, that scrupulous Count
Who beat his chaplain till the good man bent
To grant him dispensation.

DE VEZELAY.

Ay but Flos ;

Is she to dance along the slippery path
She thinks shall bring her to the house of joy
And find herself confronted by contempt
Even at the gates ? for was it not this night
You were to fly together ?

MONTARGIS.

'Twas to-night.

There is a midnight service in the chapel.
Flos and her fast friend Iolande St. Remy
Attend it. So do I. The Rue St. Mark
Is twenty paces distant. There should wait
Two saddles empty and some five well filled.
Pity it were such goodly preparation
Should run to waste. Now Iolande St. Remy
Sits on the throne of this unvalued Flos
And so shall fill her saddle.

DE VEZELAY.

By consent ?

MONTARGIS.

The horse consents, and that's enough. Ere dawn
We shall have reached Montlhery. On the road

Her strength shall fail and she shall lack support ;
Then comes the cunning Friar's well-mixed wine,
And all is as it should be.

DE VEZELAY.

For myself,
I hold it less than loyal by a spell
To work upon a woman.

MONTARGIS.

Tut ! Reprisals.
She cannot by what conjuring you will
Be more bewizarded than I'm bewitched.
But hark you ! we must take some thought for Flos.
No midnight freaks for her. My Lady Abbess
Must learn that she is mischievously minded
And lock her up. Raiz, look to this for me
And I will hold thee my true friend for life.
I needs must to the Council, for at three
They meet to wrangle of the King's disease,
And cloudy John expects me.

DE VEZELAY.

Be content ;
Flos shall be cared for—you shall know to-night
With what success.

MONTARGIS.

Be diligent. Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

DE VEZELAY.

Here is a zigzag ! I am wicked too
In some sort, and with women ; but thus to woo
And thus to win and thus to strike and stab,
Exceeds my tether. Poor forsaken Flos !
Not all her brightness, sportfulness and bloom,
Her sweetness and her wildness and her wit,
Could save her from desertion. No, their loves
Were off the poise. Her boundless flood of love
Swept out his petty rill. Love competent
Makes better bargains than love affluent ;
And his was beggarly and hers was rich.
He needs had loved her had she less loved him,
And had I less loved her—she might—in time—
But no she never could have stooped to me.
I'll do his errand—not for his sake, but hers.
No better can befall her than this night
To ponder in retreat. Some doubtful tale
I'll tell to waken up my Lady Abbess,
Which, its end answered, shall belie itself

And leave the damsel stainless. For her friend,
Poor Iolande, if I can save her, so ;
Not through the Abbess—he would smell me there—
Some other way—I think I know another ;
My Lord of Orleans is no friend to him
And loves a chance adventure. He shall hear,
And if Sir Bastard come not by a check
I'll yield some credit to his conjurors.
He's cruel over much. I've heard it said
When Blanche de Honcourt lost her hold, ere long
A body in a sack was seen afloat
Betwixt the bridges. Such things should not be.

[Exit.

SCENE III.

*The Council Chamber in the King's Palace. The KING,
the DUKES OF ORLEANS and BURGUNDY, The ARCH-
BISHOP OF PARIS, and other Councillors. Officers of
State in attendance, amongst whom are the BASTARD OF
MONTARGIS and the PROVOST OF PARIS.*

THE KING.

My Brother, Cousin John and my good Lords,
Much have I longed once more to meet you here,

And much it sometimes seemed I had to say ;
But Sirs, my voice is weak, more weak my wits,
Being as I am new risen from the grave,
The grave, I say, wherein my mind was buried,
And you shall pardon me if tongue or thought
Should falter, one or both. We meet to-day
To reason of my illness, whence it comes
And how to hold it off. But, Sirs, much more
I would that ye should reason of the realm,
Discern what ails it and divine what balm
Shall heal its ghastly wounds. Oh, my good Lords,
It breaks my very heart of hearts in pieces
So often as I wake from these bad dreams,
To find what's real worst. Apply your hearts,
I pray you, to restore my kingdom's health,
And then take thought for mine.

THE ARCHBISHOP.

So please your Grace,
Under God's providence, the kingdom's health
Attends upon the King's, whose health and weal
Are as the fountain-head whence all the land
Is watered ; 'tis in you your kingdom finds

All aid and increase, even as the Psalmist saith,
“ All my fresh springs in thee.”

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And therefore first
Behoves us reason of the first, and ask
Who and what are they that with devilish art
Poison the wells and fountain-head of France;
And there be now arrived from Normandy
Two wise and worthy monks, vouched by Sanxerre,
Your Majesty's true liege and faithful friend,
For men of marvellous aptness to rip up
The works of witchcraft. He avers, my Lords,
The province hath been purged the last ten years
Of wizards to the number of threescore,
And twice so many witches, which is due
Most chiefly to their skill and diligence.
I hold it were no wisdom to forego
Such aid as theirs.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

One word, my Lords, to that.
What know we of these monks or of their art?
Save only that Sanxerre (whom God forbid

That I should blame, for he is wise and true)
Gives credence to their skill. But wisdom errs
In nought more oft than putting easy trust
In tales when things are dark. For man is loth
In argument where grounded thought is none
And yet the theme solicitous, to fold
The wings of thought and drop its lids and own
That in a night of knowledge to roost and sleep
Is judgment's sole sagacity. Thus he
That justly should have balanced 'twixt two weights
Substantial both though diverse in degree
Of credibility, shall lose himself,
Intent on vacancy, in snatching shadows
And pondering of imponderable notes.
I say, Sirs, we know nothing of these monks,
Nor of their art.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Good cousin, by St. George
Rumour hath wronged thee much if of some arts
Thou know'st not more than most. What's that I see
Circling thy left forefinger? Jean de Bar,
Were he alive, could tell us of a work

Wrought on a golden ring which bore enchased
The royal arms of France.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

And though he's dead,
Mayhap, fair cousin, you shall see him somewhere,
And that ere long, seeing the merry pace
You travel on that broad and trodden way
That leads to his abode. Sirs, Jean de Bar,
Who, as ye know, made traffic of my youth
And coined my ignorance, a just death died.
I wish his peers no other. By his aid
(Not gifted with that affable accost
And personal grace which bids my cousin trust
In his own prowess—conquering and to conquer)
I hoped to triumph in affairs of love.
He promised too to call me up the Devil,
Whom (not content with some I daily met
Of aspect diabolic) I craved to see.
These follies of my green unguided youth
Were rendered to the flames with Jean de Bar.
Still of the art itself I spare to speak,
Delating but, in quality of witness,

The art's practitioners as I have known them ;
For whatsoe'er they feigned, I plainly saw
The Devil had power on them, not they on him.
But whether a veritable power there be
By cryptic art and more than natural mean
To exorcise, or if not exorcise,
Divine whence comes possession, not to me
Pertaineth to pronounce, but more to him
Who sits amongst us spiritually raised
To speak of spirits with authentic voice.
What saith my Lord Archbishop ?

THE ARCHBISHOP.

Sirs, 'tis true,

As by His Grace of Orleans is averred
Most wisely, that that function of the Church
Which deals with evil spirits is usurped,
And specially since of late the sword of schism
Hath pierced her very vitals (God forgive
The unspeakably abominable thieves
That thus have rent Christ's garment for a spoil)—
Since then, I say, this function is usurped
By some of ill repute ; such we disown ;

But to deny that incantation used
In sacred sort, with ardours apostolic,
Can cast out Devils, ay and the Prince of Devils,
Were to gainsay what Holy Scripture proves
Not less than daily fact. Sirs, for these monks,
They should be holy men, but that they are
I may not certify; for from their abbot's
Nor other hand ecclesiastical
Have they credentials.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

They have none from Nature;
Ne'er did I see in church or camp or court—
I will not say men like them (for in my time
I have seen visages as villainous
As any Normandy can send to scare us)—
But men of visage more detestable
I ne'er saw yet—more cruel-eyed, or men
Whose outside of their inside told a tale
More foul and loathsome. On the brow of each
Writ by kind Providence that watcheth o'er us,
I read the word "Beware!"

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

'Twere well, fair cousin,
Read where you may that word in books or men,
'Twere read to better purpose.

THE ARCHBISHOP.

My Lords, these monks
I cannot to your confidence commend.
But there is one without attends your pleasure,
A man of life religious and severe,
Both gently born and well and widely known,
Who, might it please your gracious Majesty,
Was in a vision with a message charged
To be delivered in your royal presence,
Nor otherwise divulged. With your kind leave
The Provost shall conduct him in.

THE KING.

At once.
To pious men our ears are open ever.
We'll hear this message. What may be his name
That brings it?

[*Exit the PROVOST.*]

ARCHBISHOP.

May it please your Majesty
'Tis Menuot, but in the popular mouth
Robert the Hermit. He is strangely clad
For such a presence, but his vows forbid
A garb more seemly.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Let his vow be kept.
What is it that he wears? A wild cat's skin,
To signify he dreams by day?

Re-enter the Provost with ROBERT THE HERMIT.

God's love!
Was wild cat e'er so wild?

THE KING.

Good sir, His Grace
My Lord Archbishop, tells us thou art charged
Some message to make known. Rise then and
speak.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

King and my gracious Sovereign, unto whom
I bend the knee as one ordained of God,

A message hath been given me, and I am bid
To tell thee in what sort. St. Jerome's Day,
My vows performed, I sailed from Palestine,
With favouring winds at first; but the tenth night
A storm arose and darkness was around
And fear and trembling and the face of death.
Six hours I knelt in prayer, and with the seventh
A light was flashed upon the raging sea,
And in the raging sea a space appeared
Flat as a lake, where lay outstretched and white
A woman's body; thereupon were perched
Two birds, a falcon and a kite, whose heads
Bore each a crown, and each had bloody beaks,
And blood was on the claws of each, which clasped
This the right breast and that the left, and each
Fought with the other, nor for that they ceased
To tear the body. Then there came a cry
Piercing the storm—"Woe, woe for France, woe,
 woe!

Thy mother France, how excellently fair
And in how foul a clutch!" Then silence; then
"Robert of Menuot, thou shalt surely live,
For God hath work to give thee; be of good cheer;

Nail thou two planks in figure of a cross,
And lash thee to that cross and leap, and lo !
Thou shalt be cast upon the coast of France ;
Then take thy way to Paris ; on the road,
See, hear, and when thou com'st to Paris, speak."
"To whom?" quoth I. Was answer made, "The King."
I questioned, "What?" "That thou shalt see, declare,
And what God puts it in thy heart to speak
That at the peril of thy soul deliver."
Then leaped I in the sea lashed to a cross
And drifting half a day I came to shore
At Sigean on the coast of Languedoc,
And parting thence barefooted journeyed hither
For forty days save one, and on the road
I saw and heard, and I am here to speak.

THE KING.

Good Hermit, by God's mercy we are spared
To hear thee, and not only with our ears
But with our mind.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

If there be no offence,
But take thou heed to that.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

What God commands,
How smacks it of offence? But dire offence
There were if fear of Man should choke God's word.
I heard and saw, and I am here to speak.
Nigh forty days I sped from town to town,
Hamlet to hamlet and from grange to grange,
And wheresoe'er I set my foot, behold!
The foot of war had been before, and there
Did nothing grow, and in the fruitless fields
Whence ruffian hands had snatched the beasts of
draft
Women and children to the plough were yoked;
The very sheep had learnt the ways of war,
And soon as from the citadel rang out
The larum-peal, flocked to the city gates;
And tilth was none by day, for none durst forth,
But wronging the night season which God gave
To minister sweet forgetfulness and rest,
Was labour and a spur. I journeyed on,
And near a burning village in a wood
Were huddled 'neath a drift of bloodstained snow
The houseless villagers: I journeyed on,

And as I passed a convent, at the gate
Were famished peasants, hustling each the other,
Half fed by famished nuns : I journeyed on,
And 'twixt a hamlet and a church the road
Was black with biers, for famine-fever raged :
I journeyed on—a trumpet's brazen clang
Died in the distance ; at my side I heard
A child's weak wail that on its mother's breast
Drooped its thin face and died ; then pealed to
 heaven

The mother's funeral cry, " My child is dead
For lack of food ; he hungered unto death ;
A soldier ate his food, and what was left
He trampled in the mire ; my child is dead !
Hear me, oh God ! a soldier killed my child !
See to that soldier's quittance—blood for blood !
Visit him, God, with thy divine revenge !"
The woman ceased ; but voices in the air,
Yea and in me a thousand voices cried,
" Visit him, God, with thy divine revenge !"
Then they too ceased, and sterner still the Voice
Slow and sepulchral that the word took up—
" Him, God, but not him only, nor him most ;

Look Thou to them that breed the men of blood,
That breed and feed the murderers of the realm.
Look Thou to them that, hither and thither tost
Betwixt their quarrels and their pleasures, laugh
At torments that they taste not ; bid them learn
That there be torments terribler than these
Whereof it is Thy will that they shall taste,
So they repent not, in the belly of Hell.”
So spake the Voice ; then thunder shook the wood,
And lightning smote and splintered two tall trees
That towered above the rest, the one a pine,
An ash the other. Then I knew the doom
Of those accursèd men who sport with war
And tear the body of their mother, France.
Trembling though guiltless did I hear that doom,
Trembling though guiltless I ; for them I quaked
Of whom it spake ; oh Princes, tremble ye,
For ye are they ! Oh, hearken to that Voice !
Oh cruel, cruel, cruel Princes, hear !
For ye are they that tear your mother's flesh ;
Oh, flee the wrath to come ! Repent and live !
Else know your doom, which God declares through
me,

Perdition and the pit hereafter ; here
Short life and shameful death.

[*Exit.*

THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Ho, ho ! My Lords,
What say ye to my Lord Archbishop's friend ?
A prophet or a railer ? Nay, Sirs, speak ;
Or have dumb devils entered you ?

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

My Lords,
I with His Grace of Burgundy my cousin
Stand equally denounced ; yet deem I not
That holy man a railer. To my ears
He spake disastrous truth, and from my soul
Sore wearied with the burthen of its sins,
I grieve for what is past, and pray that God,
Whose goodness and whose multitude of mercies
I rankly have abused, will give me strength
By works of penitence to rescue France,
War-wasted France my mother, and as a brand
Plucked from the burning, her unworthiest son.
And Cousin of Burgundy, for all words and deeds

Of this and other days that did thee wrong
I humbly crave forgiveness, first of God,
And next of thee ; and in the Celestines
In token of contrition will I found
Two daily masses for thy father's soul.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Gramercy, my good Cousin, by St. George
I bear no malice, I, nor ever did.
Here is my hand ; I swear from this time forth
I'll love thee as myself, yea heartily ;
And to thine enemies I hold my sword
As counter as to mine. And now, my Lords,
To business. For these Augustinian Monks
Are they at hand ?

MONTARGIS.

My Lord, they were not summoned.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Not summoned ?

PROVOST.

But they are not far to seek ;
For in the Rue des Ursulins but now
I met them, with a rabble that reared a stake,

And in their hands one Passac, at his prayers
Waiting to be confessed.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

What! Passac? No!

My good friend Passac! He to burn! God's death!
Attendance there! I'll see to that myself.

[*Exit.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Send for these Monks.

THE KING.

Good Cousin, no, not now.

My head is weak; I may not tax it more.
My Lords, pray pardon me; another day
I'll ask your further aid. The Monks can then
Be brought before you. This day's conference
May well content us, since it heals the strife
Betwixt our two chief councillors and friends;
And more to their accord I bid you look
Than the frail hope of strength renewed in me
To give the kingdom peace. Sirs, fare ye well.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Banqueting Room in the Palace of the Duke of Orleans. Tables spread. A company are assembled, amongst whom are HENRI DE VIERZON, RENÉ D'AICELIN, ENGUERRAND DE CHEVREUSE, LOBÉ DE CASSINEL, ALAIN THIBAUT, EUSTACE D'ESTIVET (the Duke's Minstrel), and GRIS-NEZ (the Duke's Fool). To whom enters the Duke's Seneschal.

THE SENESCHAL.

His Highness bids you to sit down and sup ;
He will be with you later.

DE VIERZON.

As he will.

What round white arms withhold him ?

THE SENESCHAL.

Out, De Vierzon ;

No damsel is it, but a devotee.

DE VIERZON.

That pretty Theologue De Ricarville
Is both in one. I drink her health and his.
Stay them with flagons, comfort them with apples!

THE SENESCHAL.

Robert the Hermit 'tis, I tell thee.

DE VIERZON.

So!

Then Cupid's case is desperate for a day.
What think ye of this pact betwixt the Dukes?
Shall it endure?

D'AICELIN.

Till death. But how soon death,
Under the countenance of dear Cousin John,
May enter to dissolve it, who can tell?
To-day they rode together on one horse,
Each in the other's livery. To-morrow
They are to sleep together in one bed.
The People stare and deem the day is nigh
When lamb and lion shall lie down together.

DE CHEVREUSE.

Rode on one horse!

D'AICELIN.

Yea, Orleans before,
And Burgundy behind.

GRIS-NEZ.

'Twas so they rode :
Two witches on one broomstick rode beside them ;
But riding past an image of Our Lady
The hindmost snorted and the broomstick brake.

DE CASSINEL.

Would I were sure my gout would be as brief
As their good fellowship.

DE VIERZON.

To see grim John
Do his endeavour at a gracious smile,
Was worth a ducat ; with his trenchant teeth
Clinched like a rat-trap.

DE CASSINEL.

Ever and anon
They opened to let forth a troop of words
Scented and gilt, a company of masques
Stiff with brocade, and each a pot in hand
Filled with wasp's honey.

D'AICELIN.

Nay, no more of him ;
The wine turns sour. Come, Eustace, wake thee up !
Hast ne'er a song to sing us ? Rose and Blanche
And Florence d'Ivry with her deep-mouthed eyes,
And merry Marriette,—where are they gone,
The score of maids that made thee musical
In days of old ? or if their date be out
Have none succeeded ?

D'ESTIVET.

Ah ! my youth ! my youth !
Gone like a dream, and now at twenty-eight
I live on recollections. No, my songs
Have had their day ; the charms I sang are fled ;
The ears I charmed are deafened in the dust.
What would ye with my ditties ? But there's one
His Highness made, which, if I mar it not,
Should find its way.

D'AICELIN.

Be still, De Vierzon ; hush !

EUSTACE D'ESTIVET *sings to a lute.*

1.

At peep of day, at peep of day,
Day peeped to spy what night had done,
And there she lay and there she lay
Blushing in the morning grey
And hiding from the Sun.

2.

Arise, arise, Aurora cries,
My dainty sister sweet, and throws
With frolic grace and looks that speak
Of love and gladness, at her cheek
A dew-besprinkled rose.

D'AICELIN.

Minstrel, well sung, and well conceited, Duke ;
What is this whispering, Loré ?

DE CASSINEL.

Shall I tell ?

De Vierzon's by an envious Abbess charged
That through the convent-grate he kissed a Nun,
Whereon the Court Ecclesiastical
Puts forth a process ; this that he may answer
To-morrow noon, he fain would have me swear

I saw him in St. Michael's on his knees
That very hour the Abbess of St. Loo
Swears to the kiss.

D'AICELIN.

And didst thou kiss the Nun?

DE VIERZON.

I may have kissed a linnet in a cage,
But as to Nuns, oh no.

D'AICELIN.

Come, I'll bestead thee;

As for myself, I have an errand then
At Château-Menil; but I'll send my page
With orders to swear what thou wilt.

DE VIERZON.

Much thanks,

He shall not be the loser.

GRIS-NEZ.

Ah, sweet Sir,

Had you been pleased to come to me for counsel
Before you kissed that Nun!

DE VIERZON.

What then, Sir Fool?

GRIS-NEZ.

*Knowest thou not, Sir Fool my brother,
One dirty hand can wash another ;
Oftimes offences that are twins
Shall suffer less than single sins ;
Stern forfeits tread upon his kibe
Who hath not robbed enough to bribe ;
To distance justice in the course
Who steals a purse should steal a horse ;
Not hardly the offender fares
When Accusation hath gone shares ;
Receive thou then, dear brother Fool,
Monition wise from Folly's School,
To kiss a Nun nor fear the worst
Thou should'st have kissed the Abbess first.*

DE CASSINEL.

By Peter's keys ! to moralize a kiss
No preaching have I heard more pertinent.
Here comes the Duke—no, 'tis but little Geoffrey.

Enter GEOFFREY DE LAVAL.

GEOFFREY.

His Grace desires you'll none of you depart
Till he shall join you.

DE VIERZON.

With such wine as this
To wet our wings, no thoughts have we of flight.
Is the lean Hermit with His Highness still ?

GEOFFREY.

No, he is gone ; 'tis Vezelay that's with him.

DE VIERZON.

Thou dost not say so ! Well, the times are strange ;
To the backbone Burgundian is he,
And private with the Duke ! What next ?

DE CHEVREUSE.

Why next—

[*Enter the DUKE OF ORLEANS. They rise to
receive him.*

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Kind Sirs, I pray you pardon this neglect ;
Scant courtesy it was not, but strict need.
I drink your healths. No, Seneschal, gramercy ;
I'll neither eat nor sit. My trusty friends,
I have a work in hand will ask your aid.
The Bastard of Montargis, as I hear,

Designs this night to seize and spirit away
A pupil of the Celestines ; which rape
I would not such a rotten-hearted rogue
As he is, should accomplish ; wherefore, Sirs,
Of five of you I crave attendance here
An hour ere midnight armed.

DE VIERZON.

Your Grace has named
A service I shall clasp and strain to heart
Even as my best friend's wife.

DE CHEVREUSE.


And so shall I.

DE CASSINEL.

And all.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I thank you heartily, but no ;
Montargis is attended but by five,
Which we must not outnumber. Hie ye home
De Vierzon and De Cassinel, and you
René d'Aicelin, Enguerrand De Chevreuse
And Alain Thibaut ; hie ye home and arm,
And hither hasten back at your best speed.



The rest, good night. And be ye sure, my friends,
For right good service your good wills shall count.

[*Exeunt all but the DUKE and GEOFFREY DE LAVAL.*

GEOFFREY.

A boon, my gracious Lord.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

What is it, boy?

GEOFFREY.

Let me be one.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

No, no ; too young, too young.
They'd blow thy head off like the froth of their ale,
And I should lose a monkey that I love.

GEOFFREY.

My gracious Master, at your side to die
Is all I live for.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Be content, young friend.
The time may come. Thy horoscope and mine

Point to one hour 'tis said. Enough of this.
Go to the vestuary, wherein thou'lt find
Provision of all garbs for the masqued ball.
Thence to the hall bring thou six pilgrims' habits.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Interior of the Convent of the Celestines.

IOLANDE DE ST. RÉMY and FLOS DE FLAVY.

FLOS.

A charming little Abbess if you will ;
That liberty she grants herself, good soul,
She not denies to others ; so far, well ;
But then comes Father Renault, lean and dry,
Much threatening her with the Bishop and the Chapter,
And in her straits we're straitened. Oh, no, no,
I cannot bear it ; some day I shall run,
Yes, Iolande, I will—some day.

IOLANDE.

Oh Flos !

Oh foolish Flos ! impatient of restraint
Because you scarce have felt it. The loose rein

It is that makes the runaway ; too kind
The Abbess is ; for those who say she errs
In other ways and worse, God pardon them !
Or if their tale be true, God pardon her !
But God forbid that I should know it true,
For love her I needs must.

FLOS.

What! though she's wicked?

IOLANDE.

Yes, though she's wicked. That is not forbidden.
In pain and sorrow should I love her then,
As I love you.

FLOS.

Oh, I am wicked too?

IOLANDE.

No, there I said too much. But yet with fear,
If not with pain you fill me. Flos, from my soul,
I hate the man you love.

FLOS.

Well, you speak out ;
But ere you spake I knew it.

IOLANDE.

Did you but know

The cause!—and I will tell you it in part.
Last night I had a dreadful dream. I thought
That borne at sunrise on a fleece of cloud
I floated high in air, and looking down
Beheld an ocean-bay girt by green hills,
And in a million wavelets tipped with gold
Leapt the soft pulses of the sunlit sea.
And lightly from the shore a bounding bark,
Festive with streamers fluttering in the wind
Sailed seaward, and the palpitating waves
Fondly like spaniels flung themselves upon her,
Recoiling and returning in their joy.
And on her deck sea-spirits I descried
Gliding and lapsing in an undulant dance,
From whom a choral gratulating strain
Exhaled its witcheries on the wanton air.
Still sailed she seaward, and ere long the bay
Was left behind; but then a shadow fell
Upon the outer sea—a shadowy shape—
The shadow bore the likeness of the form

Of the Arch-fiend. I shuddered for the bark,
And stretched my hands to heaven, and strove to pray,
But could not for much fear. The shadow grew
Till sea and sky were black ; the bark plunged on
And clove the blackness ; then the fleece of cloud
That bore me, melted, and I fell and fell,
And falling I awoke.

FLOS.

Yes, Iolande,

You're ever dreaming dreams, and when they're bad
They're always about me. I too can dream,
But otherwise than you. The god of dreams
Who sleeps with me is blithe and debonnaire,
Else should he not be partner of my bed.
I dreamt I was a cat, and much caressed,
And fed with dainty viands ; there was cream
And fish, and flesh, and porridge, but no mice ;
And I was fat and sleek, but in my heart
There rose a long and melancholy mew
Which meant, " I must have mice ;" and therewithal
I found myself transported to the hall
Of an old castle, with the rapturous sound
Of gnawing of old wainscot in my ears ;

With that I couched and sprang and sprang and
couched,
My soul rejoicing.

IOLANDE.

May God grant, dear Flos,
Your mice shall not prove bloodhounds. That the
veil

Befits you not, I own ; nor if you long
In secular sort to love and be beloved,
Shall I reproach you ; for if God denies
The blessing of a heart espoused to Him,
His mercy wills that love should be fulfilled
In other kind, less pure but still divine,
Less happy but still rapt ; and to this end
In his own image he created Man.
The love for man I blame not ; but oh Flos !
There are, though you may miss to see it, men
Who have transformed God's image in themselves
Into another likeness.

FLOS.

Iolande,
You hate him ; you have said so—'tis enough.

I love him ; yes, and may my false heart perish
That instant that it leaves to love as now.
And if I thought this heart would so revolt,
Or ere one sun had risen upon its shame,
It should be buried without toll of bell
Six fathom in the earth, and o'er its grave
How it came there a lettered stone should tell,
And how it was a heart that, having fallen,
Would rather rot below ground than above.
Oh, take your arms away—you shall not kiss me—
Sweet Iolande, I know you wish me well,
But is it wishing well to wish me false ?

IOLANDE.

Not if your truth were plighted to the true.

FLOS.

Whate'er his treasons he is true to me,
True as the lion that laid down its head
O'erswayed by love divine on Lectra's lap.

IOLANDE.

Deceived past rescue ! Were it Vezelay,
He is not good, but I believe him true,

Know him but too devoted in his love ;
Were it but he !

FLOS.

More kind is he than good,
Poor mortal ! Yet I love his love for me,
And him some little.

Enter the LADY ABBESS.

THE LADY ABBESS.

Well, my daughters dear,
The Lord is good and gracious to this House ;
So is His Grace the Founder. Have ye heard ?
He grants two masses daily for the soul
Of good Duke Philip, whom may God absolve !
Truly His Grace's bounty knows no end,
Such holy love he hath for this poor House.

FLOS.

Likewise its charming Abbess.

THE LADY ABBESS.

Naughty child !
No more of that. Hark ye ! the bell for Nocturns.
Go, Iolande. For Flos, she stays with me,
For I am ill and she a cheerful nurse.

Mercy! such shootings in my back! Oh me!
And such a shaking here! And then such qualms!
And here a gurgling up! By God's good help,
St. Bartlemy assisting, I have hope
To struggle through the night—but not alone.
Come Flos, we'll sleep together. Bless my heart!
Why Flos is stricken too! How pale she looks!
This frost will be the death of some poor souls;
The Marne is frozen over. Come, sweet Flos.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

*The Rue Barbette, near the Porch of the Chapel of the
Celestines. RAOUL DE ROUVROY, RANULPH DE ROCHE-
BAPON, HENRI DE FONTENAY, ANTOINE DES ESSARS,
and CHARLES DE SAVOISY, all armed.*

PIERRE DE FONTENAY.

What if she screams?

RAOUL DE ROUVROY.

Tell her the night is cold,
And kindly tie a muffler o'er her mouth.

PIERRE DE FONTENAY.

What if the Sisterhood scream all together ?

RAOUL DE ROUVROY.

Run for your lives ; but if ye do it deftly
The Sisters will have passed within the walls
Ere ye shall scare them. Pupillage walks last.

CHARLES DE SAVOISY.

But say the night-patrol should come this way.

RAOUL DE ROUVROY.

Then shall some two or three of you fall back
And seem to fight ; be desperate and loud,
And whilst the watch is busy with your brawl,
Montargis and his maid will mount and fly.
If need be, set a house or two on fire,
And shout amain for help.

Enter MONTARGIS from the Chapel.

MONTARGIS.

Down with your vizors.
God's curse upon that Priest and his discourse !
When tenthly came, and twelfthly, and fifteenthly,
I could have stabbed him. Strangers too were there,

Pilgrims—what not? who may be meddlesome
Unless discretion guide them. If they be
They'll rue it. Ranulph, are the bye-ways void?
No stragglers?

ANTOINE DES ESSARS.

Right, Montargis; say a cat's grace
That ever looks about her ere she eats.

MONTARGIS.

Back, back, I say; stand back; I think they come.

[Enter from the Chapel the Nuns, preceded by the Priests and followed by the Novices, after whom come the DUKE OF ORLEANS, HENRI DE VIERZON, RENÉ D'AICELIN, ENGUERRAND DE CHEVREUSE, LORÉ DE CASSINEL, and ALAIN THIBAUT, in Pilgrims' weeds. The Priests and Nuns pass through the gates into the court of the Convent, whereupon MONTARGIS advances.]

MONTARGIS.

My lady-love, thou enterest not; be wise;
Despairing love dares all. Thou must be mine
And mine thou art.

IOLANDE.

Thine ! Wretch, beyond all count
The loathsomest that I know, I know thee well,
And hate thee and defy thee.

MONTARGIS.

Nay, wild bird,
We'll teach thee sweeter singing.

IOLANDE.

Touch not me !

MONTARGIS.

With softer touches shall I touch thee soon ;
These rougher for this present thou must brook.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

First turn and touch another.

MONTARGIS.

Who art thou
That hold'st thy life so lightly ? Beggar, back !
Get hence ! or if thou hungerest after death
Pass forward but a step.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

There is my foot.

MONTARGIS.

And there thy death.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Well aimed against well armed.

Now, thy best ward.

[They fight. The other Burgundians come to the aid of MONTARGIS, and are engaged by the Orleanists; MONTARGIS is wounded and disarmed.]

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

So! yield thee, Bastard.

MONTARGIS.

Ha! thou knowest me? Well;

If to a Knight, I yield.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

A Knight and more.

MONTARGIS.

Say'st thou "and more?"

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

More, by St. Paul!

MONTARGIS.

My Lord

That voice and oath chiming together thus
Tell forth your title to respect. I yield.
My friends, put up your swords. My own lies there.
We will withdraw, if so the victor wills.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Go, and be wiser. Keep your counsel. I,
For his sake who befriends, shall not betray you.

[*Exeunt MONTARGIS and his friends.*]

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Unbar the gate.

DE VIERZON.

'Tis fast within. Holla !

Within there ! Ho ! Unbolt the gate.

THE PORTER (*within*).

Get hence,

Ye graceless knaves, get hence !

DE VIERZON.

Unbolt the gate ;

Here is a maiden of your House hath swooned.

THE PORTER.

So hath the general Sisterhood. Get hence,
Lewd villains that ye are !

DE VIERZON.

Out, Thickskull, out !

DUKE OF ORLEANS (*supporting Iolande*).

Frightened to death I hastily had thought,
But ne'er did womanish fear put on a face
Of such celestial sovereignty as this.
Rather the motions of the bodily life
O'ermastered by the passion of her scorn.
Open that gate.

DE VIERZON.

'Tis easy said, my Lord ;
But here's a Lack-brain keeps it barred.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Then stave it.

How fare you, lady ?

IOLANDE.

Well, I thank you, well ;
Though dumb when fain a grateful heart would speak

As with a thousand tongues, and fill the world
With thanks and praise; but there is God to aid,
Who pays all dues.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Sweet lady, when God grants
That praise from such a mouth ennobles me
He showers His choicest blessing. They within
Must pardon us some violence, for else,
Through error of their fear, this sturdy gate
Should have repulsed its own.

IOLANDE.

Brave Sirs, farewell!

And though 'tis little that poor Nuns can do
To show their sense of service, there is one
As great in power as heart, the princely Duke
Our founder, who will value at its worth
A service to the Celestines.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

My friends,
I wish you joy; and with this lady's leave
I'll wait on her to-morrow, so to learn
What guerdon ye may look for.

IOLANDE.

Heartily

The Lady Abbess and myself will strive
To do you grace and honour. Pray you, Sirs,
Stay by the gate till I shall cross the court,
For all have fled indoors and it is empty.

[*Exit.*

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Now to our beds. Sirs, what she said I swear;
A service to the Celestines I prize
At a knight's fee to each. To bed, to bed,
To dream of such a voice as in my ears
Sounds like a Seraph's in a song of praise.

Enter the Watch.

SERGEANT OF THE WATCH.

Haro! Haro! What's here! Stand, villains, stand!
Clashings of swords and screamings for the Watch!
How dare ye! To the guard-house every man.

DE VIERZON.

Nay, we were keepers of the law, not breakers;
We fought with certain caitiffs who were fain

To ravish away a maiden ; her we rescued ;
For them, they slank away.

SERGEANT.

Fie ! tell not me !
We'll have no ravishings nor no rescues here ;
No ravishings nor rescues can be suffered
After the Watch is set. To the guard-house, come.
If maidens shall be ravished and be rescued
It is the Watch must do it. Come, ye rogues.

DE VIERZON.

Stand off, old Owlet.

THE SERGEANT.

What ! the manacles ! Ho !

D'ARCELIN.

Away, ye Clot-pole-catchpoles ! Hence, away !

[*Exeunt the DUKE and his friends driving out the
Watch.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Court of the House of the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.

The BASTARD OF MONTARGIS *and his two Squires,* RAOUL
DE ROUVROY *and* RANULPH DE ROCHE-BARON.

MONTARGIS.

The house I speak of bears above the porch
An image of our Lady; old and battered
Are house and image both; none dwells within
Save a bald porter, old and battered too.
Let his old ears inform him I have need
To store some wine that comes to me from Bourg,
And hire the house; give him whate'er he asks;
Then cask these weapons that I tell you of
And take them thither. On this roll is writ
The names of certain of my men at arms;
Call them together; hold them on the wing,
And after nightfall drop them one by one

Into that house. Then keep them fast and close,
And till I come,—mayhap to-morrow night,
Early or late,—let no man pass the door.
Be secret, ye and they.

[*Exit.*]

ROCHE-BARON.

What may this mean ?

ROUVROY.

Mischief it means if I have ears. To-morrow
Will be St. Clement's Eve. The Bastard walks
In the world's eye untroubled, but in heart
He bears his Monday night's discomfiture
As new-caged tigers bear captivity.
Some bird hath whistled that the booty wrenched
From him, has fallen to that crowing Duke,
Whom if he hated humanly before
He hates with hatred more than human now.
With that he broods upon a prophecy
Which babbles of St. Clement's Eve, and tells
How that the gutters shall run blood that night,
And lilies redden in the morning sun.
There is an ancient picture too, wherein

St. Clement, with the anchor round his neck,
Sinks and draws with him underneath the wave
A knotted staff twined with the Fleur de Lys,
And holding on its point a porcupine
Enscrolled with 'Far and Near,' the Duke's device ;
And heartened by these figurings and signs
He holds the time auspicious.

ROCHE-BARON.

But Duke John—

Him must we carry with us ; without him
I hardly deem St. Clement will suffice
To hold us harmless. True, revenge is sweet,
And neither thou nor I have cause to love
His Grace of Orleans ; but revenge were mad
Without the one Duke's warrant and support
In case of need, to practise on the other.

ROUVROY.

Trust to the Bastard to draw in Duke John.
He's forward in a scheme for melting down
This newly-soldered fellowship of the Dukes.
He's gone even now to put it in the pot
Of those two Monk-magicians. As for me

My lot is cast with his ; whither he dares, .
Thither I follow

ROCHE-BARON.

If Duke John go with him

I say the same.

ROUVROY.

No question of Duke John ;
No question but he'll lead him like a lamb.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*An Apartment in the Château St. Antoine furnished with
a brazen head fixed on a skeleton, crystal globes, magic
mirrors, and celestial squares.*

FATHER BUVULAN and FATHER BETIZAC.

FATHER BUVULAN.

For a brief moment I was high in hope
They both would burn. Truly he singed his beard
In saving of his barber.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Well, it shakes us.
Unstable is the commonalty ever.

The Duke had but to tickle them with tropes
And Passac was their chuck, their duck, their darling,
Their Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,
That in our heathen fire had walked unhurt.
Oh 'tis a fickle and a foolish people!
Their faith is with success; who faileth falleth.
When we lost hold of Passac, we lost hold
Of credit and repute. De Montenay
Sends me his greeting and he hath no need
Of the enchanted armour. There's a loss
Of some five hundred crowns. De Graville's page
Comes with his cozening master's countermand,
Who cares not that his horoscope be cast
Till better times. God grant his best be bad!
Since Tuesday there has been nor maid nor youth
To spy their spousals in the magic mirror.
All day the knocker sleeps upon the door
As it were dead. What! now it stirs. Come in.

Enter the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.

MONTARGIS.

So! Reverend Fathers! winters such as these
Make fuel dear; 'tis cruel to the poor

To waste the store ; when next ye light your fire
Look that there's something on the spit to roast.

FATHER BUVULAN.

His Grace of Orleans in his brotherly love
May, if it please him, set all traitors free
To do their devilish work upon the King.
Our part right loyally have we fulfilled,
And stand acquitted.

MONTARGIS.

In your consciences,
Yes doubtless in your tender consciences
Ye stand acquitted. But elsewhere how stand ye ?
The Duke, who snatched away his friend the Barber
So seasonably, just as his wig was frizzled,
Think ye with him ye stand acquitted ? No,
Beware his wrath. And let me tell you, friends,
This frizzling of a barber doth but clinch
A foregone condemnation. Have ye heard
How ye were handled at the Council-board ?
Your very eyes and noses could not 'scape,
But seeing that they did not please the Duke,
Plain documents were they of your damnation

Confirmed in Satan's signature and seal.
To my poor thinking, Sirs, His Grace's speech
Savoured of pitch and resin. Ye best know
(For through affection and a burning zeal
Ye are well seen in faggots and the stake)
If it be pleasant to ascend the skies
In manner of an incense. But if not,
I counsel you to find some present shift
For dwelling in the flesh.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Oh Lord! Oh Lord!
Oh God be merciful! What mean you, Sir?
Know you of aught devised and put in hand
Against our lives?

MONTARGIS.

Of what I know, my friends,
I tell you what I may.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Oh, Sir, sweet Sir,
What may be done? Befriend us in our need.
Will gold redeem us? We have here laid by,
Out of our honest earnings, a round sum

In crowns and ducats ; will it please you take
And use it at your pleasure ?

MONTARGIS.

No, Sirs, no ;
Gold will do nothing ; ye must find a friend
Who for so mighty a foe may prove a match.
One only Lord there is, one only Prince,
Of such sufficiency as to ward the blows
Of the King's brother. Give yourselves to him
Bravely and wholly. Danger is a dog
That follows if ye fly, flies if ye face him.

FATHER BUVULAN.

Surely His Highness knows us for his own.
Oh, excellent Sir, commend us to His Grace ;
We wait upon his every wish and word.

MONTARGIS.

Commend yourselves by service. Well ye know,
If aught your art avails you, who it is
That by his damnable practice hath let loose
These troops of demons that torment the King,—
A sin by so much worse than fratricide

As hell is worse than death; ye know it well;
It is the Duke his brother. What ye know
That daringly declare, and ye are safe.

FATHER BUVULAN.

Oh, Sir, it was but reverence and respect
For the Blood-royal muzzled us till now;
But at His Grace's honourable bidding
The truth must be declared.

MONTARGIS.

His Grace's bidding?

The servant who doth only what is bidden
Shall earn but scant reward. He that divines
His master's need and feeds it, serves him twice;
Serves him with head and hand and heart and will;
This is the saving service.

FATHER BUVULAN.

Sir, 'tis well;

This service we will render, and the truth
Unflinchingly avouch.

MONTARGIS.

Truth is a gem
Of countless price; and life too is worth something.

Once more the Council in its wisdom meets
To vex the question of the King's disease ;
Ye shall attend it. Come meantime with me ;
A little of my teaching will ye want
Ere ye proceed adepts in speaking truth.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*The Convent of the Celestines. Nuns and Novices at work
embroidering vestments and altar-cloths.*

FIRST NOVICE.

I was next before Iolande, and heard a kind of soft
scuffle behind, and, turning round, I missed her ;
and oh ! woe is me ! I cried, there is a maid gone
and it might have been I ! And I looked through the
grating, and there he stood, a tall man and a beautiful
bachelor. He bade the other touch him if he dared ;
and there were words and oaths, and when they
drew their swords I squealed and ran away.

FIRST NUN.

Ay, and it was time, too. Who taught thee to look
at a man through a grating ?

FIRST NOVICE.

Nobody, Mother. I was looking for Iolande.

FIRST NUN.

Then do so no more. If a maid look through a grating, what may she not see? Peradventure the Grand Turk and all his Janissaries, and I know not what masquings and mummeries; or the six satyrs which danced at the widow's wedding with no more clothing than a beast's, and by God's providence took fire and were burnt; all except His Gracious Majesty, whom God preserve!

SECOND NUN.

Yes, Sister, there was another saved; which was Jean de Nantouillet; seeing he flung himself into a trough of water which was there for cooling of the wine, and calling upon St. Winifred she endowed the water with that virtue that it quenched the flames.

FIRST NUN.

But saidst thou a tall man, eh! and with a long nose?

FIRST NOVICE.

Tall, Mother; and for his nose, it may be long or may not, as it pleases God; for there was but a small matter of moonlight to see it by. But he was not a Turk, which hath tusks, they say, like a boar; nor a satyr, which is shaggy.

SECOND NOVICE.

Twice since hath a tall man come hither by the garden gate that was left open for him. I saw him through the casement in the dormitory.

SECOND NUN.

Fie! fie! This looking out of casements is unseemly. Marcian looked out of a casement and she saw a little boy with a bow and arrow, which was a heathen and shot at her. Was he a fair-faced man with blue eyes and a light-brown beard?

SECOND NOVICE.

I know not, Mother, for his hat was drawn over his brows, and he held his kerchief to his face as though he had the toothache.

THIRD NUN.

Marry, and I'll warrant you God sent him a tooth-

ache no sooner than he deserved. And if I were Abbess there should be no leaving open of gates for sinners to come in with their blue eyes and their brown beards.

FOURTH NUN.

Yea, and their rapiers at their sides like leopards, gaping and prancing up the walks that one knows not which way to turn for them.

FIFTH NUN.

No more prating and prattling. Come, Marceline, sing us one of thy holy songs, which is better than our babblement.

THIRD NOVICE.

I will sing you the song of the Knight and the Dragon.

*From men that naughty are and rude,
Save us, St. Gregory and St. Jude. Amen.*

It begins so, Mother, and then it tells what happened.

FIFTH NUN.

Go on, child; truly 'tis a good beginning, and very necessary.

THIRD NOVICE.

A good Knight, hight Sir Vantadour,
Got on his horse and rode an hour ;
Out of the city he rode amain,
And came to a forest that stood on a plain.

So full of wild beasts was that wood,
Enter it no man durst nor could ;
And those that did in twain were cleft,
And eaten up till nothing was left.

Through the wood the Knight rode forth
For half a day, from south to north ;
When, lo ! a Dragon he descried,
And on its back a Lady astride.

That Dame and Dragon were akin,
Pride was he, and she was Sin ;
The Dragon hissed, and reared his crest,
The good Knight laid his lance in rest.

"Beware," said Sin, "for Pride is strong,
And mighty to uphold the wrong ;
And woe to those that him attack,
Hissing, with me upon his back."

The Knight he rode a-tilt and smote
The scaly Dragon in his throat ;
The Dragon writhed and hissed and spat,
But nowise blenched the Knight thereat.

Then called the Dragon from six caves
Six Blackamoors that were his slaves ;
The Knight bade each and all advance,
And featly slew them with his lance.

Likewise the Dragon. Sin the while
No longer frowned, but seemed to smile ;
And called six Syrens fair to sight,
Who flung their arms around the Knight.

But back he stepped, and "Lo !" said he,
"To fight with maids is not for me ;
I know to fight where fame is won,
But now best courage is to run."

So first he fought, and then he ran,
Sir Vantadour, that righteous man :
And we from his ensample learn,
To flee from Sin and Pride to spurn.

*Holy St. Gregory grant us grace
To spurn at Sin and spit in her face. Amen.*

SIXTH NUN.

Well, God and St. Gregory forbid that we should be given over to sin, and it may be that some of the pupils see their friends more often than is convenient; but hospitality is a Christian virtue, and if the garden gate stand open on feast-days to some honest gentleman, I hope there is no harm to follow. What I say is, that he should not come muffled up and no one to see the face of him.

FIFTH NUN.

Past a doubt this knight which comes once and again is the same which snatched Iolande from the hand of the Spoiler.

THIRD NUN.

Which some will swear was sore against her will for all her scuffling and screeching. I say nothing, but if ever such a thing happens to me, I shall not stand screeching away to no purpose, I think not indeed—I shall not stand waiting for any chance of a passer-by just to fall out of one man into another.

FIFTH NUN.

St. Mary, Sister, it is not for such as thou and I to stand in dread of these dangers.

THIRD NUN.

Who knows? It is true God has been good to me for fifty years and upwards, but I were too bold to count upon his mercies as though they were never to fail me.

Enter a Fourth Novice.

FOURTH NOVICE.

I vow there is the same man again, coming in through the garden gate.

THIRD NUN.

The same again! Frightful! This must be looked to; I must see to this.

[*Exit.*

FIRST NUN.

We must all see to it, we that wear the veil. What is this hurry-skurry! Keep back, Novices; it is not for you to be looking out at windows and lying await in corridors. Nay! young legs! They're all gone before one can cross oneself.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

*Another Apartment in the Convent. The DUKE OF
ORLEANS and IOLANDE.*

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Once in a midnight march—'twas when the war
With Brittany broke out—tired with the din
And tumult of the host, I left the road,
And in the distant cloisters of a wood
Dismounted and sat down. The untroubled moon
Kept through the silent skies a cloudless course,
And kissed and hallowed with her tender light
Young leaf and mossy trunk, and on the sward
Black shadows slumbered, softly counterchanged
With silver bars. Majestic and serene,
I said, is Nature's night, and what is Man's?
Then from the secret heart of some recess
Gushed the sweet nocturns of that serious bird
Whose love-note never sleeps. With glad surprise
Her music thrilled the bosom of the wood,
And like an angel's message entered mine.
Why wander back my thoughts to that night march?

Can you divine ? or must I tell you why ?
The world without and world within this precinct
Are to my heart, the one the hurrying march
With riot, outrage, ribaldry and noise
Insulting Night,—the other, deep repose
That listens only to a love-taught song,
And throbs with gentlest joy.

IOLANDE.

What march was that ?
Said you, the Breton War ? You followed then
The banner of the Founder of this House,
His Grace of Orleans. He is brave, they say,
But wild of life, and though abounding oft
In works of grace and penitence, yet as oft
Lapsing to sin, and dangerous even to those
His bounty sheltered.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

By his enemies
All this is said and more. Are you then one ?

IOLANDE.

Nay, I know nothing save the gossiping tales
That flit like bats about these convent walls

Where twilight reigns. Gladly would I believe
Our Founder faultless if I might; but you,
Living in courts and camps, must know him well.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

He is not faultless.

IOLANDE.

Are his faults as grave
As tattling tongues relate?

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

They're grave enough.

IOLANDE.

Are you then to be numbered in the file
Of the Duke's enemies?

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Indeed I am.

Not one hath hurt him more.

IOLANDE.

What is your name?

The Abbess vows—what I but scanty credit—
She knows it not. May I not know it? No?

She says you are of credit with the Court,
And hope through certain ministries of ours
With holy relics, to restore to health
One whom the Founder hath in high regard.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Soon will you know mine errand and my name ;
My name too soon for me. It is well known
To calumny. When told it, will you fly
And banish me your presence ?

IOLANDE.

Never. No ;

If calumny assail you, much the more
Be gratitude intent to do you right.
That you are true and generous and brave
Not all the falsehood all the world can forge
Shall sunder from my faith.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Yet is there more ;

I said that calumny had soiled my name,
Which is a truth. But bitterer truth's behind.
My life deserves not that my name stand clear ;

I claim but to be true ; save loyalty
Few gifts of grace are mine.

IOLANDE.

But you are young,
And you will grow in grace.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

It should be so ;
But hardly may I dare to say it will.
I came upon a holy errand hither ;
Yet something but half holy in my heart
Detains my tongue from telling it.

IOLANDE.

Your words
Are strangely dark. I guess not what they mean,
And almost fear to ask. I know but little,
Yet know that there are dangers in the world
I have but heard of. May I trust in you ?
Oh that 'twere possible to trust in you
With boundless and inalterable faith !
Oh that 'twere possible to cast my soul
On you as on the pillar of its strength !
But you, too, you are weak ; you say you are ;

And only God is strong, and in His strength
And in none other strength may strength be found,
And in His love and in none other love
His child may win an unbewildering love,
Love without danger, measureless content.
Leave her to seek it there.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Oh, Iolande !

I love you—yet to say so is a sin ;
And such a sin as only such a love
And veriest inebriety of heart
Can palliate or excuse. An earthly bond,
Earthly as it was woven of earthly aims
By heedless hands when I was but a child,
Yet sacred as it binds me to a wife,—
This earthly-sacred bond forbids my soul
To seek the holier and the heavenlier peace
It might have found with you.

IOLANDE.

Go back, go back.

I knew not you were married ; back to your wife ;
Leave me—forget me—God will give me strength ;

There yet is time, for I am innocent still,
And I was happy yesterday ; go back.
Is your wife good ?

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Yes, she is gentle, pure,
Most loving, and much injured.

IOLANDE.

Oh go back,
And never wrong her more, and never more
Say you love me.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

And yet in loving you
I love my wife not less and virtue more ;
For virtue linked with what allured me not
Took prejudice, as though it held no league
With what enamours and subdues the soul,
And lost its hold of mine. In loving you
Virtue her sovran rights shall repossess ;
For even in the instant I beheld your face
All that this glorious earth contains of good,
As in a new creation, freshly, strangely,

Revealed itself, borne in upon my soul ;
And since the mandate which created light
And eyes not mortal then, beheld God's works
Not then defaced, no eye of man hath seen
So fair an apparition as appeared
This earth to me.

IOLANDE.

Home to your wife, go home ;
Your heart betrays itself and truth and me.
You know not love, speaking of love for two.
I knew not love till now, and love and shame
Have flung themselves upon me both at once.
One will be with me to my death I know ;
The other not an hour. Oh, brave and true
And loyal as you are, from deadly wrong
You rescued me, now rescue me from shame ;
For shame it is to hear you speak of love,
And shame it is to answer you with tears
That seem like softness ; but my trust is this,
That in myself I trust not, nor in you
Save only if you trust yourself no more
And fly from sin.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

More precious to my soul
Is your affiance, though on stern conditions,
Than ever soft surrender wildly meeting
Love's wildest wish ; nor will I longer dare,
Uplifted by the rapture of the time
Entrancing me from insight, to forget
That what is heavenliest in our mortal moods
Is not as fixed and founded as the heavens.
Yet do I dread to leave you, leaving thus
My name the victim of all vile reports
Which when you hear it you will hear.

IOLANDE.

No—no.

The evil you have spoken of yourself
I will believe, and not a breath beside.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I ask no more—no more—oh, nothing more ;
Not for one tone of that too tender voice,
Not for one touch of that transparent hand ;
No, nothing for myself. . . .

Voices without.

What ! Iolande !

Enter two Novices.

FIRST NOVICE.

Oh ! cry you mercy ! Are you not alone ?

IOLANDE.

You knew I was not.

SECOND NOVICE.

Are you angry ? Me !

It is no fault of ours, for we were sent.

The Sisters want you in the Founder's chapel
'To deck the altar for St. Clement's Eve ;

None other knows to twine the mimic flowers
And Nature's broidery to counterfeit.

FIRST NOVICE.

Old Sister Martha, mounting the ladder, tried,
We handing up the flowers ; but from her hold
Thrice fell the fleur-de-lys, and she, poor soul !
Was seized with trembling and would try no more.
She said it was unlucky.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

It was strange.

FIRST NOVICE.

Yes, truly, Sir, it scared us.

SECOND NOVICE.

Worse ensued ;

For in her fright the ladder she o'erthrew,
Which struck the Founder's banner in its fall,
And that fell too.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

That fell before its time ;

If ancient prophecy may win belief
That should have waited for St. Clement's Eve.

SECOND NOVICE.

Sir, you say true. Come, Iolande, they wait you.

IOLANDE.

I will be there anon. So tell them.

[Exeunt the two Novices.]

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

This

I said, and I will say it once again,

That for myself I ask nor word nor look
That speaks of more than pardon. What remains
Is but to name mine errand and begone.
For one far worthier than myself I crave
A boon that in the holiest human pity
You may confer. A brother whom I love,
Whom all men love, a treasure-house of weal
For France and me,—in his behalf I ask
What none but you can give. Sorely his soul
Is wrung and tortured by the terrible power
Of evil spirits, ever and anon
Re-entering his body through the gaps
Of faltering faith and intermitted prayer,
When struggling nature wearied with the strife
Yields a brief vantage.

IOLANDE.

He shall have my prayers.
'Twill be my sorrow's solace when you're gone
To pray for one you love.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Did you but know him,
In health so kind, beneficent and just,

In anguish so unutterably tried,
You'd pray with tears.

IOLANDE.

I never pray without ;
But they shall flow from deeper depths for him.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

For prayers I ask—and something more,—for service.
A vial is there in the Bernardins
Which holds the tears of Mary Magdalene,
Shed as she stood before the tomb of Christ
Ere Christ appeared ; an Angel as they fell
Caught them, and later gave them to St. John
In Patmos ; to St. Bernard from St. John
Successive Saints devolved them, and such power
Is theirs that should a virgin whom no sin
Nor sinful thought hath violated, dip
Her finger in them, calling Christ to aid,
And trace upon the brow of one possessed
The figure of the Cross, the unclean spirit
Will instantly depart, and never more
To one so fortified can fiend or imp

Make good his entrance. Now you know what boon
In what behalf I beg.

IOLANDE.

Am I the maid
That may do this? Oh, would that I were worthy!
But if no holier hath the call, then I,
Beseeching God of his abounding grace
To give sufficiency, will work in faith.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

His blessing then upon your work and you!
I will betake me to the Bernardins,
Where is enshrined the relic. Once again,
But in the hallowing presence of a rite
More solemn than a service for the dead,
We meet, and then, if so your conscience wills,
We part for ever.

IOLANDE.

Once and no more.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Meanwhile

The Lady Abbess will instruct you more

Touching myself, my Brother, and the weight
And import of your task.

[*Exit.*

Enter the LADY ABBESS.

Well, pretty one ;

You know not yet what crown of honour . . . Yes,
And worthily you wear it—here's a colour !
I wonder if my cheeks will e'er again
Glow like a meteor, and my dangerous eyes
Throw out blue lights . . believe me they could once.
Well ! there's a time for all things ! I protest
You look so stately and so lifted up
I think you know what Knight you have in hand ;
I think he told you.

IOLANDE.

No, dear Lady-Mother ;
Nor do I greatly care. How brave he is,
How kind, how generous, how great of heart,
I know—what care I for his name ?

THE LADY ABBESS.

Good child,
Say not you care not till you know. What, what,

I will not tell you if you say you care not.
Now do you care?

IOLANDE.

Yes, I believe I do.

Who is he?

THE LADY ABBESS.

Louis, by the grace of God
Of Orleans, Valois, Blois and Beaumont Duke,
Count of Touraine! Hi! hi! Beshrew thy heart!
The red blood ebbs amain; the fleur-de-lys
Hath beaten back the roses.

IOLANDE.

Oh my Mother!

Then he whose malady I'm charged to cure,
He is the King! Oh Mother, yes, I know—
“A treasure-house of weal to France and him;”
He said to France. Mother, no hour shall fly,
No minute that I shall not pass in prayer.
Send for the Hermit. Tell him in the chapel
I shall be found.

THE LADY ABBESS.

Well, well, my child, I will.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*Another Apartment in the Convent—FLOS DE FLAVY and
RAIZ DE VEZELAY.*

FLOS.

Talk not to me of love ; I loathe its name
More than blue plague or the unburied corse
That none dares touch. Give me thy hand ; I have it ;
But is it mine ?

DE VEZELAY.

For ever and for ever !

FLOS.

Mine for all work that I shall put it to ?

DE VEZELAY.


In all submission thine.

FLOS.

Now give me this ;

[Draws his dagger from its sheath.]

Thy dagger's haft is fashioned to a cross,
As though for handling by some Christian Knight



Apt to avenge a woman! Vain pretence!
Oh empty emblem! Out of date in France.
What dagger now leaps lightly from its sheath
Save in a tavern brawl?

DE VEZELAY.

Now by my soul
You do us less than justice. Women's wrongs
Find yet in France avengers.

FLOS.

Is it so?
Then swear upon this Cross to prove it so.
Swear to avenge me and be swift to strike—
I say not whom, lest naming of his name
My lips be withered and my human speech
Turned to a serpent's hiss.

DE VEZELAY.

That do I swear;
And by what's holiest in the heart of man
I hold myself herein God's minister
Of wrath and judgment and your will as His.

FLOS.

Give me thy hand again. It is too white.
I dedicate this hand to truth and love,
And hatred and revenge. White as mine own !
Dye it and bring it back to me to-morrow,
And I will clasp it to my heart. Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

*The Council Chamber—The KING, the DUKE OF ORLEANS,
the DUKE OF BURGUNDY, the ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS,
and other Councillors ; The BASTARD OF MONTARGIS,
the Abbot of the Bernardins, the Captain of the
King's Guard, and others in attendance.*

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

The worthy Abbot here, my Lords, will vouch
It has been tried a hundred times and more
Nor e'er found wanting.

THE ABBOT.

Never yet, my Lords.
The last demoniac who was dispossessed

Was one from Vermandois, a damsel plagued
With many devils, that she raved and shrieked
And tore her clothes. A virgin of St. Cloud
Dipping a finger signed her, whereupon
A volley of blue sparks flew from her mouth,
Then crows and winged serpents ; and with that
She dropped her arms and knelt, and praising God,
Gave thanks for her deliverance like a lamb.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

You hear. Since which she rests inviolate.
Enough, Lord Abbot ; we will weigh your words.

[Exit the Abbot of the Bernardins.]

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

May it please your Majesty, I question not
But that the tears shall work for good ; they may ;
But this should hinder not that means be sought
To track these devils home to them that send them ;
And these sagacious Monks, as I am told,
Have now their noses on the slot. They wait
To tell their tidings. Ho there ! bring them in.

[Exit MONTARGIS.]

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

For me, my Lords, as soon would I take counsel
With Satan's self as with his mimes and minions ;
But since they please my Cousin let them come.
I think—what smell is this?—they're not far off.

Re-enter MONTAGIS with FATHER BUVULAN and

FATHER BETIZAC.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Rise, holy Fathers ; say to my Lord the King
How speeds your quest ?

THE ARCHBISHOP.

But first, I pray you, tell
Whether it be by sorcery ye work,
Or holier ways.

FATHER BUVULAN.

My Lord Archbishop, no ;
'Tis not by sorcery ; but as Moses wrought
His wonders, and by Jannes and by Jambres,
Egyptians and Sorcerers, was misdeemed
To be a Sorcerer like themselves, so we
By Sorcerers and their crew are Sorcerers called,

But by the faithful faithful. For our art
We draw it from the holiest source, a book .
Which God to Adam for his solace gave
When he had wept a hundred years for Abel.
He that shall read this volume when the Moon
Conjoins with Jupiter in the Dragon's head,
Shall know of secret counsels that are hatched
In Satan's kingdom.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

In what language, Sir,
Is this book written ?

FATHER BUVULAN.

That which was used, my Lord,
In Paradise.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Who taught it you ?

FATHER BUVULAN.

My Lord,
The Book I speak of teaches it.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Well, well ;
To the purpose. Say, if ye know, what man

Sends by his execrable art these fiends
To vex the King, himself a fouler fiend
Than any that obey him.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Honoured Lords,
We know, but dare not tell.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

How ! dare not tell !
How dare ye to be silent if ye know ?

FATHER BETIZAC.

My Lord, so loth are we to deem it true,
Although we know it, we would fain believe
Our art this once betrays us.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Tush ! no words
Or words of weight ; no trifling, Friars, here.
Speak to the point or take your hummings hence.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Oh, Sirs, but it is perilous to accuse
Men in high places ! 'twere an ill return

For our outspoken fearless honesty
Should we lie open to the vengeful strokes
Of guilty greatness; and we humbly crave
Some warrantise that what we're bid to speak
Spoken shall bring no jeopardy of life
Or liberty or goods.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Now look ye, Friars;
I've heard you heretofore with patience; Yes,
With singular patience, bred of that respect
In which I hold you, so far I have heard you.
But I am not a Saint; patience has bounds;
And if ye do not instantly speak out
By God I'll have your heads.

FATHER BUVULAN.

Ah! my good Lord,
You deal too hardly with our just intent;
But being so bidden we must needs obey
Though it may cost us dear. My Lord, the man
Who to our sorrowing insight was revealed
The worker of this evil on the King

Stands in this presence on the King's right hand,
His Grace the Duke of Orleans.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Death and Hell !

Ye felon Monks, accuse ye me ?

THE ARCHBISHOP.

My Lords,

This is plain blasphemy—these men blaspheme—
My Lords, these men, I say these men, my Lords,—

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

These men, Archbishop ? Venomous snakes, not men ;
Fell vipers hissing through the mask of Monks.
Detestable Apostates, come ye here,
Yea to the face and front of Majesty,
To trample on the Royal blood of France !
Rear up thy head, thou sacrilegious serpent,
Ope thy white lips and spit that lie again
In the King's face.

THE ARCHBISHOP.

I say, my Lords, once more,
These men profane this presence, speaking words

That are most impious, and unfit to utter,
And I may add untrue, and very fearful,
Transgressing and o'erleaping, so to say,
Those bounds of modesty which good men honour,
Insomuch that I verily stand amazed.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I say no more. I am ashamed to waste
Good honest anger on a reptile's sting
Or scold at kites and jackdaws. Sir my Brother,
I deign not to reply to this foul charge,
But leave it to your justice.

THE KING.

They shall die,
Yea, instantly, an ignominious death.
Ho ! Captain of the Guard, arrest these Monks.

[The guard is called in and the Monks pinioned.]

My ever loving and beloved Brother,
Who from our earliest years hast been to me
A staff and stay, my dear delight in weal,
My solace in affliction, be it known
Who strikes at thy fair fame strikes at my heart,

And as a traitor to the realm and me
Shall suffer death.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Oh mercy ! spare our lives !
My honoured Lord of Burgundy, save us, save us.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I save you ! Take them hence.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

But first a word ;
Of your own malice, though as deep as hell,
Ye have not learnt this lesson. Tell from whom
Beside the Devil ye derived it ; tell,
And I myself may plead for you.

FATHER BUVULAN.

My Lord,
You are most merciful and a Christian man.
We were assured His Grace of Burgundy
Knew more of this than we.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

My Cousin John !

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

What, I, ye miscreant jugglers!

MONTARGIS.

Take them hence—

Off with them—off! and gag them, lest their lies
Should spread amongst the people.

FATHER BETIZAC.

Base, false knight!

[The Monks are gagged and carried off.]

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

My royal Cousin, what hath moved these Monks
To mingle me with their malignities,
I do protest I know not. Before God
I am as innocent of this wrong to you
As when my mother whelped me.

THE KING.

Doubt it not,
My noble Brother. Think not that our Cousin,
Who did but yesterday at the altar's foot,
In token of a life-long good accord

Partake with you the bread of life and love,
Would ever so surrender his purged spirit
To evil counsels as to soil himself
With perfidies like these.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I well believe it ;
And do as freely from my heart absolve
My Cousin of complicity in this,
Yea with a faith as absolute as myself
Of that I'm charged with. I would not believe
A cat had stolen my cream upon the oath
Of two such knaves as these ; how should I then
Believe for them my royal Cousin wrought
To poison my good name ? He did it not ;
No, by the honour of the Fleur de Lys,
He did it not. My pledge I here renew
Of friendship and alliance.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And I mine ;
Here is my hand.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

• So be it. Now, my Lords,
Our day's work thus determined, God be with you.
With your good leave, my Brother.

THE KING.

Lords, farewell;
Our Brother as we think will wish us with him.

[*Exeunt the KING and the DUKE OF ORLEANS.*]

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I crave a word of counsel ere we part:
We see, Sirs, how no week can pass but breeds
Some new device for healing of the King;
And what we now have witnessed proffers proof
How easily in this good men may err,
The dupes of knavish craft. Touching these tears,
My Cousin may be right or may be wrong;
Certes his purpose and intent is good;
But that his counsellors and instruments
Are unimpeachable, demands a doubt:
The Abbot of the Bernardins, I hear,
Is but a wily and a slippery saint;
And for my Cousin's virgin, who but knows

What manner of maids they be that trade with him.
Then for the tears; there is another bottle
Shrined in the Convent of St. Genevieve
Which some think is the truer. How this be
I know not; but I know it is not meet
Such things be hazarded in wantonness,
And to this end it is I ask your aid.
I deem that whoso shall essay such things,
If harm should follow, howsoe'er excused,
Should expiate the issue with their lives.
So rash attempts shall fitly be foreslowen,
And none shall tamper with the King's disease
Save those that in themselves and in their means
Have a full faith. Hold up your hands for "Yea."

[*All hands are holden up.*]

It is decreed. I will not keep you longer.
Farewell. Montargis, stay with me. Farewell.

[*Exeunt all but the DUKE OF BURGUNDY and the
BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.*]

Well, this is strange, Montargis; by St. George
I nothing know what made those Monks so bold;
They had no cue from me.

MONTARGIS.

And by the Dragon
I'll swear it was the truth that made them bold;
For certain is it what they said was true;
The King's bedevilled by the Duke, no other;
Men do not deal in dangerous crimes for nothing,
And who but he could profit?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Who but he?
Let but the King be kept incapable
He thinks to rule supreme.

MONTARGIS.

And for what cause
Saved he up Passac, whose infernal arts
Compass the King from hour to hour?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

But why
The Monks should be so desperate for the truth
At forfeit of their heads . . .

MONTARGIS.

That should be answered;
Why true then, let me see. Faith! they were stung

At the Duke's meddling with their roast the Barber,
And, taking count he would avenge him, reckoned
Their vengeance should have won the race of his.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And when their reckonings ran them on a rock
They hailed to me, beshrew them! It is well
My Cousin seems to think no evil.

MONTARGIS.

Seems.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Not honest, think'st thou, in his seeming?

MONTARGIS.

Nay,

Your Highness searches men with inquisition
Subtler than mine. You're positive the Monks
No warrant had from you. I that am bound
To know you nice and scrupulous of speech
May swear to what you say. But who beside
Will take it for a truth that men so mean
And lowly of condition would thus dare
To put their quarrel with a potent Prince

To mortal issue, save at his behest
Who only is more powerful still? 'Tis vain
To dream the Duke, or any man, howe'er
He mask the vengeful battery of his thoughts,
Acquits you in his heart. 'Tis not in man
To hold you innocent; and if you deem
The Duke so minded, you are lulled to sleep,
That so the dagger of a dire revenge
May waken you to death.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

By Anthony's cap
I swear I had no part in this at all,
Nor knew of their intent.

MONTARGIS.


Sir, 'tis all one;
Part or no part, 'tis credited to you,
And will be ever. Sir, go not abroad
Unarmed or unattended. Be advised;
You are not safe. From this time forth you walk
With pitfalls in your path. 'Tis you or he
Must fall to rise no more.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Well, I'll be wary.

MONTARGIS.

One vantage you may suck from what hath chanced.
The Monks thus dying for the word they spake
Will leave an echo in the people. These
Will now misdoubt the Duke, and if mischance
Should haply overtake him, some will say
It was not undeserved. Let care be used
To spread the accusation ; taking note
The Monks, as they were led to death, were gagged
To stifle it. Bid waverers call to mind
The dealings of the Duke in earlier years
With Jean de Bar, and that enchanted ring
Which still he wears, that gives him absolute sway
O'er women be they ne'er so chaste ; which ring
He scrupled not most impiously to employ
Even in the Holy Week. Noise that abroad ;
And likewise that he hath a chamber, locked,
Which none may enter, where the pictures hang
By scores, of ladies o'er whose virtue thus
He foully triumphed.



DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Truly, I have heard
Of such a chamber.

MONTARGIS.

More than heard have I,
For I have seen it.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Hast thou? By St. George
Thou hast an entering art. How got'st thou in?

MONTARGIS.

Sir, by the golden key. There is no lock
Which that key fits not. To your Highness too
Free entrance shall it open, would you view
This zodiac of fallen stars.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Some idle hour.
But go, Montargis, see if the Monks be safe,
And bring me word. I am but ill at ease.
'Twould comfort me to hear their heads were off.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

*The working-room of a Painter. The BASTARD OF
MONTARGIS and the PAINTER.*

MONTARGIS.

Well, Sir, these foolish women, as I said,
Beset me for my picture—no escape ;
And if a hundred crowns may answer it,
There is the gold ; and being thus besieged,
I hold my ransom cheap.

PAINTER.

The sum, my Lord,
Has more relation to your quality
Than my deserts. A side-face shall it be ?
Your pardon—so—a little more this way—
There—there, I have it. Touching this scar, my
Lord ;
Shall it be painted ?

MONTARGIS.

As you please.

PAINTER.

The face

Should tell its story ; we will paint the scar.
So now to work.

MONTARGIS.

Excuse me ; not to-day ;
My leisure serves not ; but some fortnight hence
I'll come again. Whose face is that, I pray,
That gleams from yonder panel ?

PAINTER.

That, my Lord ?

It is Her Grace of Burgundy's.

MONTARGIS.

True—true ;
You told me so before—stolen as she sat
Over the lists at Nêsle.

PAINTER.

'Tis but a sketch,
Yet of great price to me ; for this wrought out

Builds up the fortune of my piece in hand,
Salomé in the hall of Herod.

MONTARGIS.

Hah !

That face befits the argument. The mole
Upon the neck,—is that, as some aver,
An added charm, or is it not a blemish ?

PAINTER.

There is a power in beauty which subdues
All accidents of Nature to itself.
Aurora comes in clouds, and yet the cloud
Dims not, but decks her beauty. Furthermore
Whate'er shall single out a personal self
Takes with a subtler magic. So of shape ;
Perfect proportion, like unclouded light,
Is but a faultless model ; small defect
Conjoint with excellence, more moves and wins,
Making the heavenly human.

MONTARGIS.

For myself,
Unto things heavenly am I devote,

And not to moles and warts or humps and bumps.
Yet I consent, Her Grace of Burgundy
Hath charms, as you have painted them, that vie
With any France can boast.

PAINTER.

'Tis kind, my Lord,
In you to say so ; but I spared no pains.
Look closer ; mark the hyacinthine blue
Of mazy veins irriguous, swelling here,
There branching and so softening out of sight.
Nor is it ill conceited. You may mark
The timbrel drooping from her hand denotes
The dance foregone ; a fire is in her eye
Which tells of triumph, and voluptuous grace
Of motion is exchanged for rapturous rest.

MONTARGIS.

'Tis all exceeding good. I take my leave,
And, you forbidding not, some fortnight hence
I come again.

PAINTER.

At your command.

MONTARGIS.

Good day.

[Goes out, but returns.]

I have bethought me of a friend whose soul
Lies in the hollow of Her Grace's hand
Soft fluttering like a captured butterfly,
To whom this picture were the very leaf
That it would feast on. In his amorous eyes
This portrait would be worth a thousand crowns.
Trust it to me, I prithee, for one day,
That I may show it to my friend.

PAINTER.

My Lord,

So soon as it hath stamped its effigy
Upon that altar-piece I told you of,
'Tis yours to sell; and for a forward step
So please you in the mean time take and show it.
Permit me to attend you. By your leave.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

*The Chapel in the King's Palace. IOLANDE and ROBERT
THE HERMIT.*

ROBERT THE HERMIT (*kneeling at the altar*).

Father, that throned in glory and in light
O'erseest all things, and this Earth thy work
In its first newness fresh from Thee surveyd'st
And sawest that it was good, behold it now
Old and adulterate with pain and sin
And cursed with strife, whilst anguish and despair
Cry piercingly, but not to Thee, for pity.
Behold it now a world of blood and tears ;
And as by power Thou mad'st it fair at first,
So by thy mercy, so by thy infinite love,
So by thy heavenly washing, cleanse it now.
Almighty Father, spare this realm of France.
Father, this region, fairest of the earth
Whilst Thou wast with us, wanting Thee is foul,
And from its filth and rank corruption teem
All loathsome, all unutterable crimes.
Oh may the few that serve Thee serve Thee so

That many may be saved. Visit this Vine
Which Thou did'st plant and erewhile mad'st so
strong ;

Visit Thy Royal Husbandman King Charles,
That, charged to tend it, he have Thee to aid,
And fainting not, have power to chase and smite
The wild boar breaking in. And if this Maid
Be chosen of Thee, a vessel of Thy grace,
Shower Thou thy blessing on her high endeavour.

[*He rises.*]

Maid, I adjure thee for the last time now
If any breath of earthly passion dim
Heaven's mirror in thy mind, renounce this rite ;
For as the blessing were beyond all price
If thou and thine attempt indeed were blessed,
So deep were thy damnation if, through sin
Of self-deceit, or frailty of the flesh,
Or wavering faith, or human loves at war
With heavenly, thou mad'st havock of this hope.

IOLANDE.

Hermit, I saw her ; she was robed in white,
With golden hair that glistened in the sun,

And eyes that looked in turn from me to Heaven
And Heaven to me, compassionate and pure
And radiant with celestial love and joy.
“ I am St. Mary Magdalene,” she cried ;
And then as though she caught the word from Christ ;
“ Forward to Zoar ; faint not, look nòt back ;
“ If doubt assail thee, for that o’er thy soul
“ The shadow of a sin hath fled, deem
“ That doubt to be but devilish, and know
“ That dear and sacred in the sight of God
“ As innocence itself ~~is~~ blest contrition ;
“ Else why was I beloved, and whence this crown.”
With that, the glory round her head shone forth
With sevenfold lustre, and she vanished.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

See ;

The Duke, the King.

*Enter the KING, the DUKE OF ORLEANS, The ABBOT OF
THE BERNARDINS, with the phial, and PASSAC.*

THE KING.

Brother, I prithee bid the Sacristan
Leave jangling of those bells.

K

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I hear no bells ;

'Tis but your fancy, Brother: I have heard
The ear hath phantoms, like as hath the eye,
And men hear sounds that are not. It is common.

THE KING.

True ; once I thought my body was a church,
My head the belfry ; and you'd scarce believe
What clangour and what swinging to and fro
Went on, and how the belfry rocked and reeled,
Till Death, the knock-kneed laggard, came to church ;
Then all was peace.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

No more of that. Look, look
There by the Altar is that spotless Maid
On whom the sainted Magdalene drops anew
Her tears of tenderest love, which, turned to balm,
With potent touch shall heal and fortify
This shaken yet majestic soul of France.
Make no delay.

THE KING.

Oh Virgin fair and pure,
Thou hast a goodly presence, and thy face
Is like the face of one who longs for Christ
And sees Him coming in the clouds with power ;
And now thou drawest near, thou'rt not of earth ;
For there's a glory round thee, and thine eyes
Are as that Seraph's which I saw long since
When God was good and gracious to my soul
And sent me messages of love. Oh maid !
I see a Heavenly message in thy face
And know thee more than human.

IOLANDE.

Royal Sir,

It is a vision you behold, not me ;
I see it too ; whichever way I look
Is light and glory, for it fills the place,
And angels' eyes meet mine.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Let none gainsay
That angels' eyes behold this work. Oh thou

Redeemed from sinful love by love divine,
Who, weeping in the darkness nigh the tomb,
Wast by the angels bidden not to mourn
For Christ was risen, which heard thou went'st thy
way

With fear and with great joy,—teach us to weep
In such wise that great joy may come through tears,
Knowing Him risen : thou debtor unto whom
Love brought forgiveness and forgiveness love
Redounding each to other, ask for us
That love and pardon our great debt demands :
Thou who with tears didst wash the feet of Christ,
Wash them again with tears, wash them again
With tears of intercession for the sins
Of God's afflicted servant, Charles of France.

THE KING.

I know him—'tis the Hermit—he does well
To clothe himself in skins. Brother, a word ;
It is not meet I undergo this rite
In Royal robes ; I should be humbly clad ;
I and the Hermit will change clothes.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Nay, nay,

This is no time to linger. Kneel as you are.

Lord Abbot, place the phial on the altar.

Now, sainted Iolande, Beloved of God,

Perform your hallowed function.

THE KING (*kneeling*).

Be it so.

IOLANDE.

I, as divinely called, and by the grace

I trust is given me, sign thee with this Cross ;

And by God's power, and by the Cross of Christ,

And by the virtue of these sacred tears

Wept by St. Mary Magdalene, enjoin

All evil spirits that inhabit here,

If any now inhabit, to depart,

And I command that none henceforth shall dare

To vex the soul of this anointed King.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Amen ! amen ! so be it !

THE KING.

There they go —

That's Astramon, that's Cedon. Get ye hence,
False traitors! My Lord Abbot, follow, follow,
And sprinkle holy water in their track,
Or they will turn again. Good Hermit, follow.

*[Exit, followed by ROBERT THE HERMIT,
the ABBOT, and PASSAC.]*

IOLANDE.

Hear me, Angelic Host! Seraphic Bands,
And Spirits that erst imprisoned here on earth
Have burst your bonds and mounted, list to me
A child of earth, to whose weak hands were given
The spear and shield of Christ,—oh bear me up
Now that my task is done, lift up my heart,
For it is trembling, tottering, fainting, sinking,
And teach it such a song of joy and praise
As, borne aloft toward the Mercy-seat,
May mix with hallelujahs of your own!
And oh that I were worthier, and that now,
Upspringing from my consummated task,
I might but be released and join your choirs

In endless anthems ! God of boundless love,
Take me, oh take me hence !

Re-enter PASSAC.

PASSAC.

My Lord, the King,
As hath been sometime heretofore his wont,
Hath bid us take away his sword.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Well, well ;
No matter ; say no more.

PASSAC.

He calls for you.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I come. Oh, Iolande, a hasty vow
Was that I vowed, that when thy work was wrought
I never more would ask to see thy face.
Once, once again I must. Ere the sun set
I bring thee tidings of the King.

[*A cry within.*

My Lord !

THE DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I come, I come.

IOLANDE.

I fear you now no longer ;
Christ hath me by the hand and I am safe.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Passac, attend her to the Celestines.
Who calls so loud ? I come, I say, I come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*The Secret Cabinet in the Palace of the DUKE OF ORLEANS,
hung round with Pictures, each concealed by a curtain.
The DUKE OF BURGUNDY, the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS,
and an Attendant.*

MONTARGIS (*to the Attendant*).

Withdraw the curtains and retire.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Too true ;
Wild as the winds, they tell me, wild as the winds.
He knows not those about him nor himself ;

Son of Perdition, Scape-goat, Man of Sin,
He calls himself, and foams at all who say
"Your Grace," "Your Highness," or "Your Majesty."

No madman who believes himself a King
Is so enamoured of his royalties
As this poor King envenomed is against them.
To see the Fleur de Lys most angers him,
And when he can he tears it. One alone
Hath power upon him (whence derived we know)
The Milanese enchantress Valentine,
My worthy Cousin's wife, who reads such books
As when the hangman burns he puts on gloves
For fear of what may happen. In his rage
He seized the old Archbishop by the throat,
Bidding him cease philandering and fiddling
And dig himself a grave beneath the gallows.
The Archbishop, in a mortal terror, cried,
"Oh let me go and I will do 't,"—whereat
He squatted on the floor, and laughed.

MONTARGIS.

This day,
If ever, shall your Highness seize the reins.

The people are inflamed ; in every street
They gather, hurling curses at his head
Whose practice once again hath crazed the King.
The death, too, they demand of that young Witch
Whose art the Duke hath used.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.


That was decreed
Beforehand.

MONTARGIS.

Sir, a Council should be called
Ere this cools down.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Already it is called ;
It meets at six.—Ho ! here's a galaxy
Of glowing dames ! Well done, my amorous Cousin !
Whate'er his errors at the Council-board,
By Becket's bones I cannot but commend
His choice of paramours. Banners are these
Ta'en in Love's warfare, and hung up to tell
Of many a Noble, many a Knight despoiled.
Ha ! were it not a frolic that should shake



Grim Saturn's self with laughter, could we bring
The husbands hither, each to look round and spy
The blazon of his dire disgrace.

MONTARGIS.

'Twere sport
That were I following my father's hearse
Would make me roar with merriment.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Who's this?

Tell me the name and quality of each
In order as they come.

MONTARGIS.

This is Adele,
Wife of the Seneschal de Montenois.
Beautiful vixen ! for three years and more
He caged her in his castle on the Yonne
To teach her tameness ; and she learnt revenge ;
Whereof her present love is part and lot.
Yond Cupid whom you see there in the ceiling
Poisoned his arrow when he shot at her.
She mimics gracefully a fondling softness,

But there's less danger in a bear's embrace
Than her caressings.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

God ha' mercy! Pass;

Who is the next?

MONTARGIS.


Evangeline St. Cler,

The lily of Bordeaux, Count Raymond's daughter;
An easy, lazy lady, freely fraught
By nature with a full complacency
And swelling opulence of inward joy
Sufficient to itself, that knows no want,
Too careless happy to have need of love.
And leave her unmolested, she were chaste
As Thekla in the cave; but urged and pressed
Resistance is too troublesome. She's kind,
And if a lover wring his hands and weep,
She can refuse him nothing.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Weep for a woman!

I'd have the fool well whipped. I know the next;
She, if I err not, is De Chauny's spouse.



MONTARGIS.

Pressing a portrait to her pouting lips,
Which once were not so pale ; and whence the change
Ask her successor smiling opposite,
The Jew Rispondi's daughter fresh from Rhodes.
A polished corner of the Temple she,
Dove's eyes within her locks ; an innocent child
Sold as a toy and senseless as a toy,
Who hardly knew what love or sin might mean.
Her reign was short.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And then the next !

MONTARGIS.

Which ? This ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

She with the timbrel dangling from her hand.

MONTARGIS.

I know not this. This was not here before.
The one beyond it . . .

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Not so fast; this face

I surely must have seen, though not, it may be,
For some time past. It hath a princely grace
And lavish liberty of eye and limb,
With something of a soft seductiveness
Which very strangely to my mind recalls
The idle days of youth. That face I know,
Yet know not whose it is.

MONTARGIS.

Nor I, my Lord;

Albeit the carriage of the neck and head
Is such as I have somewhere seen.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.


By Heavens!

It is my wife.

MONTARGIS.

Oh no, my Lord—no, no;

It cannot be her Highness.



DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

But it is ;
I tell thee, Bastard of Montargis, this,
This picture is the picture of my wife.

MONTARGIS.

And I, my Lord, make answer, it is not.
There is a mole upon the neck of this
Which is not on your wife's.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

That mole is hers ;
That mole convicts her.

MONTARGIS.

What ? a mole ? Well, yes—
Now that I think of it, some sort of mark,
A blot, a blur, I know not what

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

That mole.
By God, Montargis, I will have his blood.

MONTARGIS.

My Lord, I do beseech you, be not rash.
I own this is not at all points the place

Where I could wish to find hung up to view
A portrait of Her Grace of Burgundy :
But patience is a virtue which the times
Demand of married men ; to shout one's shame
Were but to add to injury disgrace ;
Make not an open scandal ; keep it close ;
Nor give to every mocking mountebank
A theme for jest.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

No scandal ; there's no need ;
But ere yon sun shall set that villain dies.

MONTARGIS.

'Tis just he should ; and as the world wags now
There will be twenty triumph in his death
For two that seem to mourn.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

He dies, by God !
This hand shall kill him if none other.

MONTARGIS.

Nay,
Such handiwork should not become your Highness.
Give me your warrant and the deed is done.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Ere the sun sets.

MONTARGIS.

A later hour were better ;
We want not daylight for a deed like this.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I sleep not till he's dead. Come thou with me
And take thy warrant.

MONTARGIS.

Sir, at your command.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Look here, Montargis ;

[Drawing his sword.

Should a breath be breathed
That whispers of my shame, the end is this.

[Stabs the portrait in the heart.

[Exeunt.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Street.—DE VEZELAY *meeting his Squire.*

DE VEZELAY.

What of Montargis? Hast thou found his track?

SQUIRE.

'Twas dark ere I had reached the spot; but there
I spied him; he was muffled in his cloak
And skulked beneath a porch you'll find half way
Betwixt the Celestines and Gate Barbette;
It bears for sign the image of our Lady.
I left Philippe to watch and came to tell.

DE VEZELAY.

Then there shall he be met with.

SQUIRE.

He is armed.

DE VEZELAY.

Else could I not assail him. Should I fall
Take thou this token unto her thou knowest,
And say I gladly would have lived to serve her,
Wherein defeated, I as gladly die.
Which ended, to my mother take this purse.
It sums the wealth of Raiz de Vezelay.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Convent of the Celestines.—*The DUKE OF ORLEANS*
and IOLANDE.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I knew, sweet Iolande, though thou couldst not,
The import of that word which Passac brought,—
“He bade us take away his sword.” Poor soul!
So long as sense is with him he takes thought
For all, and ever as the clouds within
Speak to his spirit of a coming storm,
Desires to be disarmed. Now other signs
Denote it, and we blind ourselves in vain.

IOLANDE.

Oh, and the guilt is mine—’tis mine, all mine;

And if indeed the storm should strike, for me
One mercy should be left, and it is this,—
That he take back his sword and plunge it here.
Oh better far to perish by the sword
Than sickening with the sense of sin and shame
To die a lingering death, cast out from grace,
Rejected and forsaken.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Iolande,

Beloved, never yet have shame nor sin
Stained thy resplendent soul, nor ever shall.
One bliss may be forbidden us, my beloved,
But thou art still a chosen child of Heaven,
For Heaven is in thine eyes and in thy lips
And in thy port and in the very voice
Which speaks thee outcast and forlorn. Oh think
That earthly love hath oft a Heavenly mission,
And comes as comes the Comforter, to chase
The spirit of despair which God reproves
And cherish hope. Oh glorious heavenly Hope,
That from the perishings and dyings down
Of its own outgrowths ever springs afresh,
And as it springs, clasped in the arms of Love,

Is rapt to such fruition as repays
All losses and mishaps. I could have borne,
I thought I could have borne, to lose thee, love,
Caught in a blaze of triumph and of joy
That snatched thee from my sight ; but as thou art
Nor Earth nor Hell shall part us.

IOLANDE.

Earth and Hell !

It is for Heaven to part us. Earth and Hell
Are closing round and pressing in upon us
That neither may escape the other's snare.
My strength hath left me. I am fallen, fallen,
And know myself no more as I was once
A free and fearless ranger of the skies,
Bathing in sunshine and in rainbow lights,
And dreaming things divine. Earth hath me now :
My spirit is in chains ; and if I dream,
'Tis of a darkness blacker than Earth knows,
And of a bitterer bondage.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Look not back ;
'Tis that way darkness lies. God's will it was

That thou shouldst faithfully strive, yet strive in
vain

To bring the afflicted succour. That is past;
He doth not doom thee for thy righteous zeal
To share their prison-house and clank their chains.
Come forth then from the Past; come bravely forth,
And bid it get behind thee. We will fly
To fields where Nature consecrates the joys
Of liberty and love. With thee to rove
Through field and pathless forest, or to lie
By sunlit fountain or by garrulous brook
And pour love's hoarded treasures in thy lap,
Bright as the fountain, endless as the stream,
Wild as the forest glades,—Oh what were this
But to foretaste the joys of Paradise,
And by a sweet obliviousness forget
That Earth hath unblest hours and dim abodes
Where Pain and Sorrow dwell.

IOLANDE.

Alas! alas!

'Twere to forget that there's a God in Heaven.
Prince, I have told thee I am weak through grief;

Weak through the overthrow of faith and hope ;
Weak through the triumph of malignant powers ;
And weak through what beside I will not say.
And here I stand before thee, a poor child,
Unutterably wretched and abased,
But knowing there is yet a further fall.
Oh, spare me, save me ! make me not a prey ;
For I am wounded almost unto death,
And cannot fly.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Enough. Oh Iolande,
Thy spirit in its weakest hour is strong,
And rules us both ; and where thy spirit rules
Is sanctity supreme, and Passion's self
Is in thy presence purified and purged
From earthly stain and ministers to grace.
No word nor wish shall henceforth violate
That holy precinct.

Enter FLOS DE FLAVY.

FLOS.

Iolande, oh fly !
Take instant flight ; a message hath been brought

From Raiz de Vezelay in fearful haste ;
The people clamour and the Council sits
To judge thee, and no safety but in flight.

IOLANDE.

Great God ! one Angel watcheth o'er me still
Sent by Thy pardoning love, the Angel Death.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

The Council sits to judge her ! Who hath dared
Without my mandate to convene it ?

FLOS.

Sir,

His Grace of Burgundy in Council sits,
And to appease the people pledged his faith
That judgment should be passed.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

His Grace is mad,

Or else 'tis in the dark he strikes, not knowing
Why nor at whom. Fear not for Iolande ;
I'll to the Council instantly, and all
Will then be right. My Cousin and myself
Are now in amity, and were we not,

We ever have been as we ever shall
Frank friends or open foes. All will be right.
I'll tell them it is I shall answer this,
For 'twas of my devising.

IOLANDE.

Oh ! no, no ;
You shall not go ; all was well done by you ;
The guilt was only mine.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Sweet Iolande,
Your arms about me thus would once have strained
The staunchest of my purposes—but now . . .
[*Breaks away.*]

ROBERT THE HERMIT *enters.*

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Is this a time for clippings and embracings ?
Kneeling in prayer were meeter ; know'st thou not
What threatens thee, and hear'st thou not thy knell ?

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I know what threatens those that threaten her.

[*Exit.*]

FLOS.

It is the people that I fear the most ;
They are as cruel as that dangerous Duke,
And madder than their King.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Unhappy maid,
Haste thee to Sanctuary ; a dreadful fate
Awaits thee else.

IOLANDE.

Hermit, it is but death.
Let me stay here. What death am I to die ?
Is it by fire ? God grant it be by fire !
For holiest men aforetime have so died.
Oh Hermit ! am I utterly unworthy
To die like them ?

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Maiden, the hand of God
Hath written up thy sin. Thy fatal touch
Polluted and depraved the inherent grace
Of those most holy tears.

IOLANDE.

Oh 'tis most true ;
My guilt is great ; the visions of the sense
Beguiled my wandering soul, and I misdeemed
Fallen nature's ecstacies for grace divine.

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Look further for thy fault. How and whence came
That treachery of the sense? the love of God
Enamours not the sense, nor, being pure,
Conspires with that, like losels o'er their cups,
To inebriate the soul and so betray.
For love of God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Holy Ghost, comes not with heat,
With seizure, transport and with ravishment ;
Since these are wild and fugitive as the lights
That dance and flicker o'er a new-filled grave ;
And where these are, there are the fumes of death.
And savour of corruption—amorous love
Tainting the love of Christ. I saw even now
Him that went hence reluctantly let go.
Search thou thy heart ; avoid the wrath of God ;
And that thou may'st avoid it, take thou heed,

Nor brave in wantonness the wrath of Man.
It were presumptuous sin to court that death
Which God in His great mercy and good time
Grants or withholds.

FLOS.

Yes, Iolande, oh yes,
'Tis tempting Providence to linger. Come.

IOLANDE.

Take me to Sanctuary. I will wait God's time.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*A Street. In front is the porch of a house, surmounted
by an image of the Virgin.—The* BASTARD OF MON-
TARGIS *and* RAOUL DE ROUVROY.

DE ROUVROY.

This north wind bites. I am half sick with cold.

MONTARGIS.

The night is chill; but something in my soul
Dances and sparkles like yon frosty star.

Work, when a man is working with a will,
Warms him at heart.

DE ROUVROY.

This hanging by and waiting
Is what I hate. Come but the work to hand
It warms me well.

MONTARGIS.

No lover for his love
Waits with more ardent and impatient joy
Than I for him. And look! he comes! Hide, hide.
[*They retire under the porch.*]

Enter the DUKE OF ORLEANS *and* GEOFFREY DE LAVAL,
his Page.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Now haste thee home, and bid the Seneschal
Bring me swift muster of the men-at-arms
Wherever I may be.

MONTARGIS (*springing from the porch, followed by*

DE ROUVROY *and others*).

That is in Hell.

[*Stabs him.*]

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Ha! know ye whom ye strike? Villains, 'tis I,
The Duke of Orleans.

MONTARGIS.

The man we want.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

I know thee not, nor whence thy grudge to me;
But thou hast struck the life.

[*Falls.*

MONTARGIS.

And will again.

[*Aiming again at the Duke, whose Page, throwing
himself on his master, is stabbed and dies.*

MONTARGIS.

Fool, what thy master needed not is thine.
He hath enough.

DE ROUVROY.

What! is he dead? Make sure.

MONTARGIS.

Look in the gutter ; full of blood he was ;
But if that drain him not . . . Fly for your lives,
There's some one comes.

[Exeunt MONTARGIS and his gang.]

Enter DE VEZELAY and his Squire.

DE VEZELAY.

What horrible sight is this ! The Duke ! the Duke !

DUKE OF ORLEANS (*raising himself*).

And who art thou ? Is't not De Vezelay ?
Not many minutes have I left of life,
De Vezelay—

[Seeing the body of his Page.]

Alas ! poor faithful boy !

And could'st not thou be spared ! De Vezelay,
Lift me and take me to the Celestines
Alive or dead. Despatch thee. If God will
I fain would reach the Celestines alive.

[Faints.]

DE VEZELAY (*assisted by his Squire, takes up the Duke*).

Accursed be my feet that came too late,
My hand, that could not find a time to strike

Ere this was acted. Bastard! man of blood!
'Tis thou, 'tis thou that didst this murder. So!
Swiftly but smoothly to the Celestines.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

*The Council Chamber. The DUKES OF BURGUNDY,
BOURBON, and BERRI, the titular KING OF SICILY, and
divers high Functionaries and Officers of State.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I will be sworn, my Lords, the Duke my Cousin
Can clear himself of this. The people fume
And rub again old rancours, and in chief
That satyr's dance, when, as by miracle,
Of five that from his Brother's torch took fire
Masquing in garbs of tow and burned to death,
The King alone escaped, thanks be to God!
They murmur, too, of Passac's rescue, wrought,
As they misdeem, in malice to the King;
Whence they, by evil inference, charge the Duke
That he designed the present woe. For me,
I hold him innocent, though much misled.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Good Nephew, for the witchcraft let the witch
Be answerable singly ; mix not up
His name with hers.

DUKE OF BERRI.

When she hath smelt the fire,
Doubt not the people shall be pacified.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Clerk, is the warrant ready?

CLERK.

Here, so please you.

[*As he signs the warrant, enter MON-*
TARGIS, who whispers in his ear.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And next, my Lords, the testy time considered,
Behoves us to take order with all speed
Touching the Regency. My Cousin's claim
Stands first. I marvel he is not amongst us ;
I scarce can think the city so incensed
But he might find his way in safety hither.
Yet, though he slights us, let it not be said
His absence slurred his rights. The vulgar voice

Is loud against him ; but what skills it ? Noise
Shall never fright prescription from its course,
Nor shall a puff of popular discontent
Move ordinance aside.

[Shouting is heard in the streets.]

DUKE OF BERRI.

What cries be these ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Know'st thou, Montargis ?

MONTARGIS.

Sir, the citizens

Demand the death of that young Sorceress
Who practised on the King.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

There is her doom.

[Gives him the warrant.]

See thou the citizens be satisfied ;
Their urgency is just.

[Exit MONTARGIS.]

DUKE OF BOURBON.

But hark again !

I seem to hear an uproar here within,
A hideous shrieking.

Enter the King's Chamberlain.

CHAMBERLAIN.

Oh, my Lords! my Lords!

A treason—such a treason—such a deed—
A deed so barbarous, all the world's despite
Can never match it, hath been done—Oh God!
So black a treason . . .

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

What, upon the King!

CHAMBERLAIN.

Not on the King, my Lord,—the Duke—the Duke—
His Grace of Orleans.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

God in heaven forefend!

What hath befallen him?

CHAMBERLAIN.

Dead, dead, my Lord:

Most foully murdered.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

My sweet Cousin dead!

CHAMBERLAIN.

Stabbed in the street as he was hastening hither :
Scantly attended and unarmed.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Stabbed dead !

KING OF SICILY.

Merciful Heaven ! Whose monstrous deed is this ?

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Oh God, Thy hand is heavy on this realm !
When will the measure of Thy wrath be full
And horrible portents cease ?

KING OF SICILY.

Who did it ? Who ?

Who did this murder ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Ay, Sir, speak ; who did it ?

CHAMBERLAIN.

I know not who, but they are more than one
And running different ways.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Send for the Provost ;
Set double guards upon the city gates,
And let none pass.

CHAMBERLAIN.

The Provost is astir
And the whole city in the streets. The gates
Are closely guarded, and 'twas seen by some
Whither the murderers fled. With these for guides
The Provost tracks them.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Nephew, are you ill ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Ill ? No ! who says I'm ill ?

DUKE OF BOURBON.

You're deadly pale.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Who can abide so terrible a blow
And keep the crimson in his cheeks ? Who's safe
If thus the very gutters of our streets
Run with the blood of Princes ? Who's secure ?
Which of us next ? Send for the Provost.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Nay,

It were but hindering him to call him hither ;
He's hot upon the quest.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Then God forbid
That we should hinder him.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Why lo ! he's here.

Enter the Provost of Paris.

KING OF SICILY.

Speak ; hast thou found them ? Hast thou found the
fiends
That did this execrable deed ?

PROVOST.

My Lords,
Some of their number tried the Gate Barbette,
But found it shut ?

DUKE OF BERRI.

And whither fled they then ?

PROVOST.

I think, my Lords, I know ; and might I search
Whose house I will, high, low, or rich or poor,
Or though the noblest in the city, then
I'll stake my head these traitors shall be caught.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Search where thou wilt ; in Paris none, thou know'st,
May dare to shut his door against the Provost,
Save only Princes of the Blood.

PROVOST.

My Lords,
The powers I crave are such as bear no note
Of reservation.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Take them to the full.
What say ye, my good Brothers and my Cousin ?

KING OF SICILY.

All privilege pushed by, break every bar
That stays thee.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Even as we would ourselves;
Hut, hovel, royal palace, all alike,
Enter and search.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Nay, hold ye there. For me,
I'll have no nuzzling catchpole cross my door,
As though misdoubting that a royal roof
Should harbour cut-throats.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Cousin !

PROVOST.

In your hands,
My Lords, I place my office. 'Tis for you
To do your pleasure.

DUKE OF BERRI.

Nephew, should thy door
Be solely barred, when all stand open else,
There were a second slaughter done this day,
And thy good name the victim.

KING OF SICILY.

By God's death
I would myself impeach thee.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Spare thy threats,
Good Uncle. It was I that did this deed.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Too well I knew it from the first.

KING OF SICILY.

And I.

DUKE OF BERRI.

And dar'st thou say thou did'st it, thou that satt'st
Pledging him at my board but yesternight,
And with him at Christ's table did'st partake
A pledge more sacred still ? Dar'st say 'twas thou !

KING OF SICILY.

Oh shame to knighthood and our Royal House !
Pluck from thy miscreant crest the Fleur de Lys
And stick the deadly hellebore in its place,
For from this hour attainted is thy blood,

And from the Royal Tree of France thy branch
Is lopped and on a dunghill cast to rot
With all that's base and abject. Hence! begone!
Get hence or I will spurn thee with my foot
And push thee out of door.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Beware, good Sirs,
The day we meet again.

[*Exit.*

KING OF SICILY.

Pursue him, Provost,
Arrest him,

DUKE OF BERRI.

Be not hasty. First take note
Which way the people tend.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

'Tis well advised;
Let's muster each of us our several guards
And draw them to a head; the people else
May turn upon us.

KING OF SICILY.

Then why sit we here?

Up and be doing! for each minute lost

May give him wings to fly. Get we to horse.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*The Convent of the Celestines. IOLANDE kneeling beside
the body of the DUKE OF ORLEANS. In front RAIZ DE
VEZELAY and FLOS DE FLAVY.*

FLOS.

She hears us not. Vex not her ears with words;
They do no good.

DE VEZELAY.

But if she linger here
Her death is sure.

FLOS.

Thou know'st her not; I do;
She will not fly.

DE VEZELAY.

Alas, then she is lost!

FLOS.

Her soul is hardly with her. 'Tis with his.
Since she took water and with her kerchief washed
The bloodstains from his face, she hath not stirred.
How grand he looks ! Death's grandeur and his own.

IOLANDE.

Not cold—not yet.

DE VEZELAY.

Did she not speak ? •

FLOS.

To us ?

No, not to us.

IOLANDE (*springs to her feet*).

Great God ! Look there, look there !
The blood is gushing freely from the wound.

DE VEZELAY.

Then is the murderer near.

Enter the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.

MONTARGIS (*affecting to start back*).

Oh piteous sight !

Oh woeful spectacle ! What, lies he there,

He that was yesterday so bold and gay !
At this even they that loved him not would weep ;
And how should I forbear ?

IOLANDE.

Assassin, hence !

Profane not thou the presence of this corse,
Lest it arise and slay thee. Felon, hence !

MONTARGIS.

What ! charge you me with this unhappy deed ?
And call you me a murderer ?

FLOS.

Yea, she doth.

MONTARGIS.

Ha ! doth she truly ? she is ill advised.
Her pardon if I weigh but at its worth
The charge of one, who, if I read aright
The warrant in my hand, herself is charged
With deeds more terrible than she lays on me ;
Foul witchcraft linked with treason ; for which
crimes
I come, as by this warrant is commanded,
To take her to her doom.

FLOS.

Fell miscreant, hold ;

Approach her not.

MONTARGIS.

Stand from me or by Heaven

I'll shake thee from my path.

DE VEZELAY.

False child of Hell,

Home to thy dam !

[Stabs him, and he falls.]

MONTARGIS.

Perfidious Raiz, why this ?

I never did thee wrong.

DE VEZELAY.

For all mankind

Whom thou hast wronged in putting on the mask

Of manhood who wast born and bred a fiend,

I take this vengeance.

Enter the Provost of Paris followed by Officers of Justice.

PROVOST.

What new gap for life
Is opened here? More blood? Without, within,
In streets and houses, ay in churches too,
Rage violence and slaughter, and this night
The very skies rain blood.

[Turning to the body of the DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Unhappy Prince!

I honoured thee in life, and do I now
Forget to do thee reverence!—Ha! by Heaven,
Unless mine eyes play false, this writhing wretch
Is he whose malice slew thee, and my zeal,
Though hasting, is belated. Say whose hand
Was his that balked the headsman of his due
And laid this traitor low?

DE VEZELAY.

That hand was mine.

PROVOST.

I blame thee not, but would not he should die
Till he be questioned at the Châtelet;

The rack shall bring some hidden truths to light
Which else were buried with him.

MONTARGIS.

I appeal
From them that sent thee to my Sovereign Lord,
His Grace of Burgundy.

PROVOST.

In vain, in vain ;
His Grace hath fled the city.

MONTARGIS.

Fled ! So—Well—
Take thou my body ; for the breath that's in't
Beware that it take wing not by the way,
For now it flutters even as for a flight
More distant than the Duke's.

PROVOST (*to the Officers*).

Sirs, take him hence.

MONTARGIS.

One moment, Sirs, I pray you. Ere I go,
Fain with this lady would I make my peace.

My purpose was that she should share my flight,
And of this warrant I possessed myself
To save her, not to harm. This to attest
Behold what's here, the hand and seal of Death.

IOLANDE.

Make thou thy peace with God and not with me ;
For in God's court and presence we shall stand
Both thou and I this night.

PROVOST.

Sirs, we lose time ;
I say convey him hence.
[*Exeunt the Provost and his Officers, with MONTARGIS. Clamour and tumult is heard without, and enter ROBERT THE HERMIT.*

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Oh haste thee, haste !
A rolling mass of fury comes this way ;
Fly by the wicket ; Raiz de Vezelay,
Attend her, I beseech thee ; I the while
Will from the window speak to them, and strive
To stem the torrent.

IOLANDE.

Hermit, it is I

Must speak and vindicate the fame of him
Whose lips are silent.

[She advances to the window, is struck by an arrow shot from the crowd, and falls. At the same time the doors are forced, and the crowd appears, but pauses at the sight of the DUKE's body and of IOLANDE fallen.]

Hermit, I am slain ;

And that is well. Christ will receive my soul,
Knowing that though I fondly loved another
I strove to love but Him. That other too
Christ will receive ; for if he sorely sinned,
Deep was his penitence and large his love.
I seem to see the Citizens at the door,
But now mine eyes wax dim, or else my mind,
And all things swim and glimmer. Cease, dear
Flos,

Thou vainly striv'st to staunch it ; let it flow.
I see more clearly now. Ye that love truth
And of these fearful miserable days

Would justly judge, accuse not in blind wrath
Him that lies there, whose true and generous soul
Was faithful to the King. 'Twas mine, 'twas mine,
The fault was mine, that though I worked in faith
And sought the King's deliverance, all was vain ;
Being I was not worthy. Lo ! I die,
And bless the hand from which this arrow flew,
And ask forgiveness, first of God, and next
Of you, the People. Free amongst the dead.

[*Dies.*

ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Back, Citizens ; that which ye sought ye have,
Though now methinks ye would ye had it not ;
And some are weeping. Hie ye to your homes.

[*The people retire.*

He turns to FLOS and DE VEZELAY.

Arise, if horror have not starked your limbs,
And bear we to the Chapel reverently
These poor remains. In her a fire is quenched
That burned too bright, with either ardour fed,
Divine and human. In the grave with him
I bury hope ; for France from this time forth

Is but a battle-field, where crime with crime,
Vengeance with vengeance grapples; till one sword
Shall smite the neck whence grow the hundred heads,
And one dread mace, weighted with force and
 fraud,

Shall stun this nation to a dismal peace.

[*Exeunt.*]

NOTES.

PREFACE, P. IX.

THE abilities and accomplishments of Louis Duke of Orleans did not die with him. On the very day of his death was born Dunois, Bastard of Orleans (the offspring of his amour with Madame De Chauny), who was cherished by his widow with a love not less than that which she bare to her own children, and to whose wisdom and prowess Charles VII. owed the restoration of Normandy and Guyenne to the crown of France; whilst his legitimate son, Charles Duc d'Orleans, wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt, applied himself to literature and poetry for his consolation during a mournful captivity of twenty-five years. "Il faisait des vers mieux que personne en France, et trouvait un douloureux plaisir à célébrer, dans de touchantes ballades, le regret de passer sa vie loin de son pays, de sa famille, de ses amours, et de rester oisif et inutile, sans pouvoir gagner la gloire des chevaliers. Il déplorait aussi les calamités et rappelait l'ancienne renommée du noble royaume de France, lui reprochant ses désordres qui avaient attiré la colère céleste. Il demandait à Dieu de lui accorder, avant d'arriver à la vieillesse, les plaisirs de la paix et du retour. D'autres fois, il reprochait à la

Fortune d'exercer sur lui une si rude seigneurie, et de faire si fort la renchérie.

“Dois-je toujours ainsi languir ?

Hélas ! et n'est-ce pas assez ?”

Ce triste refrain revenait à chaque couplet de la ballade, et elle finissait ainsi :

“De ballader j'ai beau loisir,

Autres déduits me son cassés,

Prisonnier suis, d'amour martyr ;

Hélas ! et n'est-ce pas assez ?”

Barante, vol. vi. pp. 228, 229.

The gifts and attainments which adorn the exile of a Prince of the House of Orleans in our own time, are not therefore without a precedent in times past.

P. 147.

“And say I gladly would have lived to serve her,

“Wherein defeated, I as gladly die.”

So speak from their graves the Spanish lovers and martyrs of Liberty in Landor's Inscription :

“Lubenter quiesceremus libertate partâ ;

“Quiescimus, amissâ, perlubenter.”

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